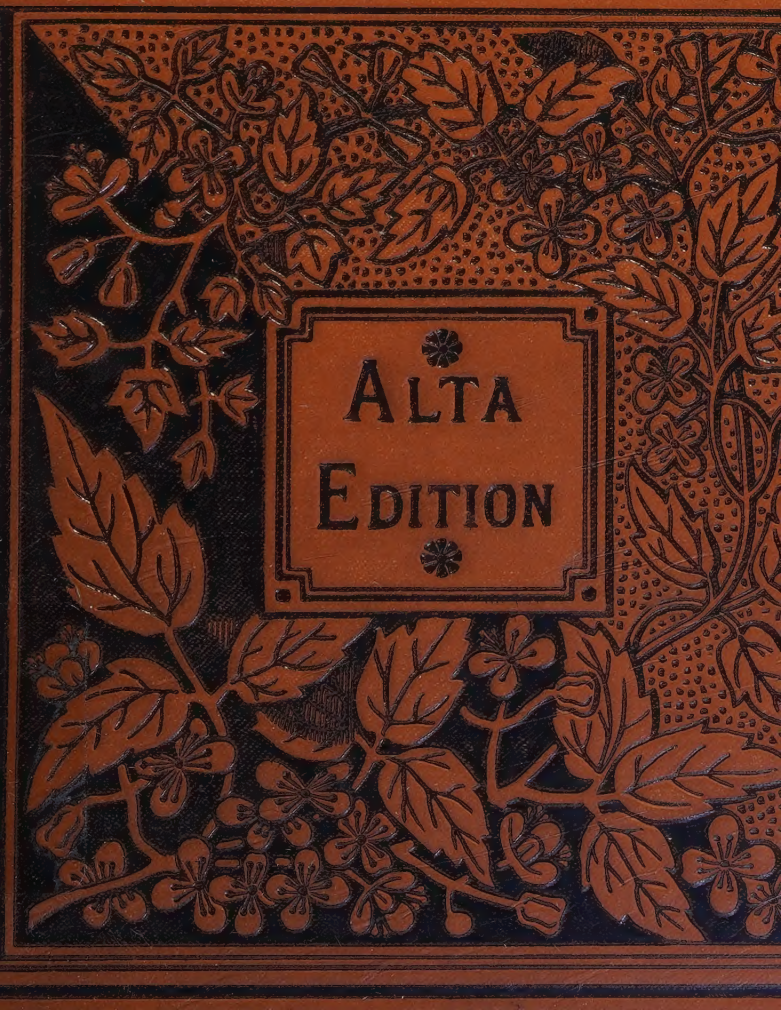
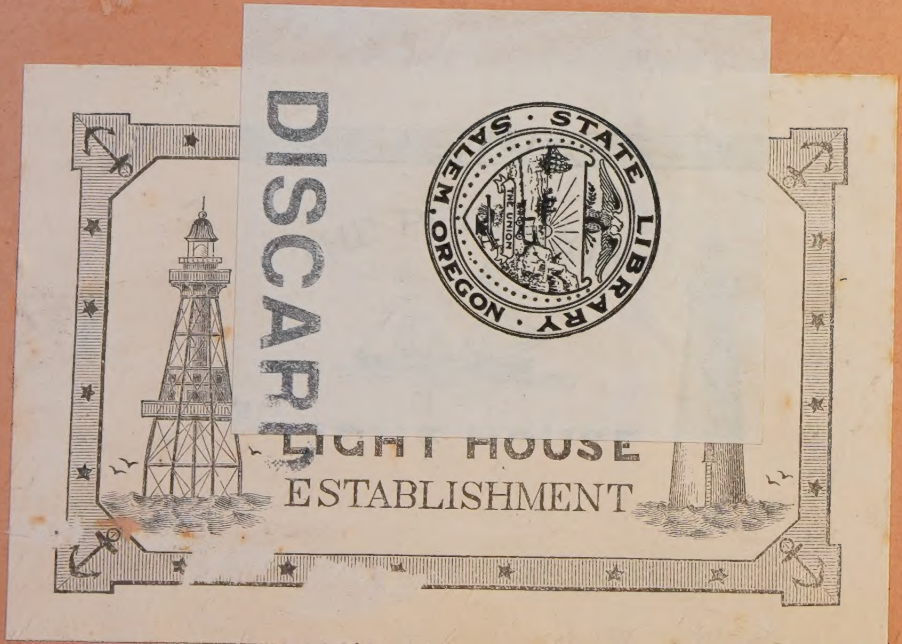
NORTHERN LIGHTS





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Zudi the Gypsy.

NORTHERN LIGHTS.

STORIES FROM

Swedish and Finnish Authors.

TRANSLATED BY

SELMA BORG AND MARIE A. BROWN,

THE TRANSLATORS OF THE "SCHWARTZ," "BLANCHE" AND "TOPELIUS" NOVELS.

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Northern Lights.

THE NORTHERN LIGHTS.

A CHILD sat by the window, as the daylight slowly fled;
And clearly o'er the winter sky the Borealis spread:

"What is that lovely light there, which sends out beams so broad?
Oh, can it be some child who takes his silent way to God?"

The mother answered simply: "'Tis the Northern Lights you see."
But then the question followed of what those lights could be.

"The learned do not know as yet—'tis doubtful on the whole;
They think it an electric light which radiates from the pole."

This answer was beyond the boy; he stood without a sound,
And saw the flame grow high and bright upon the dark blue ground.

At last, it dawned upon him, and with features all aglow
He threw his arms around her neck, exclaiming: "Hush, I know!

"When angels o'er the darkened earth, with heaven's message fly,
And 'neath the deep blue starry roof the white wings swiftly ply,

"Then is the sky all lighted up, the rosy flames appear;
We do not see the wings, oh no! we see the shadows here.

"When you become alone on earth, and heaven has hidden me,
Then I will stand behind the gleam and send a word to thee."

THE SAVOYARD.

SOME years ago there was seen in Paris a little Savoyard, who had a monkey which he exhibited. The monkey was a very amusing creature, and always drew spectators around him, because he performed a multitude of tricks. The monkey could drill, march, dance, jump through a hoop, and do all manner of things. The gay populace of the Paris streets stopped as soon as they caught sight of the pretty Savoyard boy with his little monkey. Pennies and laughter constituted the reward for every exhibition.

François, the owner of the monkey Cesar, returned every evening to his humble home with a very rich harvest for the day. When he in the evening counted his money, he rejoiced over his prosperity, returned thanks to the Madonna for it, was happy and built air-castles for the future.

Nothing is permanent in this world, not even a

monkey's success ; this Cesar verified, for a formidable rival of his triumphs appeared. This rival was in the shape of a dog, who bore the name of Brutus, and drew to himself the fickle public's attention, so that Cesar had to perform all his tricks without bringing his master anything but his trouble.

The dangerous rival who so suddenly put an end to François's joy and income, was owned by an Italian called Guiseppo, and was a very learned animal. He renounced entirely the dog's nature to go on four feet, for he always showed himself walking on two, and in this noble attitude he executed a great variety of feats to the immense delight of the gaping crowd.

One day Brutus was dressed as a general, another as a cardinal, again on the third he was seen arrayed as an elegant lady, and in whatever guise he showed himself, he displayed new and amusing talents which elicited peals of laughter. In short, Brutus and his master understood the art of drawing the spectators to them, so that Cesar could no longer count on any interest from the public.

The immense Paris ought, however, to have been large enough to afford an income to monkey as well as dog artists, and such would also have been the case, had not Brutus's master, with a diabolic persistence, persecuted the poor Savoyard.

As soon as the latter stopped with his hand-organ, he could be sure that the Italian with his dog took his post quite near. If any spectators had collected around the organ to witness the monkey's manœuvres, then Brutus had only to become visible, and they abandoned the Savoyard, who, quite crest-fallen, took his organ and went to another street; but again was the owner of the dog on his track, and again he took the public from him.

It thus continued for several weeks. François would long since have left Paris and gone to another city, had not two circumstances withheld him from it. First, he had actually been twice upon the road from Paris; but both times had the Italian and Brutus followed him, therefore he returned in the hope that the other would continue his course, but then Guiseppe had also turned back. Secondly, there was a gentleman in a gray cloak and of a strange appearance, who had always been among those who had observed the strife between the Savoyard and the Italian, and that too with a highly irritating smile. When François, sad and disheartened, absented himself, without receiving as much as a single cent, the gray-clad gentleman always approached the boy, gave him several pieces of money to buy himself bread, and said:

"Do not give up, but see that you conquer him."

François desired nothing better than to conquer his hated adversary, whom he knew full well. They had met in Savoy, where Guiseppo had fallen in love with François's only sister, the beautiful Nanon. The girl rejected his love, because she was attached to a young Savoyard, who was also enamored with her. The Italian swore in his rage that she should never have the one she wanted, and it actually seemed as if this oath was to be fulfilled, for the parents of the boy Nanon loved had given their consent to the union, on the condition that Nanon should bring a dowry of 2000 francs. Nanon was a poor serving-girl, whose parents were dead, and she had no other support in life than her brother François. This latter, a couple of years older than his sister, promised her, however, that if she did not weep and feel troubled, he would go out in the world and try to earn her dowry, so that she could marry her heart's choice.

François then started off to Paris with his monkey. In the beginning everything seemed to favor his beautiful plan; but suddenly Guiseppo placed himself in his way, and it was all over with François's success. Nanon would have no portion, so it looked, and this odious Guiseppo would be in the right, when

he swore that she should never have the one she loved.

Every day that passed, without François bringing home with him any gain but the few pence the gray gentleman gave him, the poor boy became more and more discouraged; but at the same time that the hope of contributing to his sister's happiness faded, there awoke a thorough-going aversion to Guiseppo. François could not sleep at night, lost appetite, and the fine lively eyes no longer smiled with youthful gladness and unconcern, but looked quite gloomy. He racked his brains night and day to discover how he could teach his little monkey some trick which might revive public interest. He caressed Cesar, asking:

"How shall we conquer that mean Guiseppo?"

One day, when he again asked his dumb friend the same question, Herr Cesar was engaged in eating an apple. He could not answer; but he began to play ball with the apple. François took the hint, and now the monkey was taught a number of juggler tricks. François procured some small metal balls and a pair of short sticks, which Cesar learned to throw with It had taken several days to practise this, and during the time François had not left his home. When Cesar was judged skilful enough to appear in public,

François left home one beautiful day quite early in the morning. He did not see his tormentor for the whole day, and Cesar's proficiency gained much applause from the population of the suburbs.

Proud and happy as a conqueror did François return home that day; he had neither seen Guiseppo nor the gentleman in the gray cloak. François now thought, that the first-named had got tired of following him and withdrawn to another market.

Brief are the moments of joy, and of short duration became also François's rejoicing. The next day, François was not outside his door, before he found himself face to face with Guiseppo. The Italian giggled quite maliciously when he saw the Savoyard, who thought, as he continued his way:

"To-day must I gain the victory over him, or else, Cesar, we will go and throw ourselves in the river."

The monkey nodded quite knowingly and blinked at Guiseppo and his dog, who took the other side of the street. The talented Brutus responded to the monkey's hostile looks with a wicked glance of the eye, and gave vent to a smothered growl. After walking a few paces, François stopped and exclaimed in a loud voice:

"The little juggler Cesar will now appear."

In an instant a crowd of idlers gathered around

the Savoyard, who allowed the exhibition to immediately take place. Guiseppo grinned at him and placed himself right opposite François. In a high voice he announced that Brutus would dance à la Taglioni. The crowd divided itself and formed two groups—one around Brutus, Taglioni, and the other around Cesar, the juggler. Our hero now caught sight of the gentleman in the gray cloak and almost burst into tears, for now he took for granted that he would lose all the spectators that remained around his hand-organ; but to his great surprise this was not the case, for the greater part of those who had inclined to Brutus, now turned to see the monkey. Brutus had not succeeded as Taglioni, and Cesar threw his balls in triumph. Guiseppo was enraged, and Brutus got several smart cuts of the whip to pay him for making a failure of it. Thus it went for three whole days. François knew no bounds to his joy.

On the evening of the third day Guiseppo approached the Savoyard, and declared that if he dared to remain in the places where Guiseppo gave his representations, he would make his Brutus eat up Cesar. Just as the Italian made this friendly declaration and was about to take himself off, the gray gentleman stood at François's side.

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"I will afford you both a way to put an end to your quarrel at once and earn much money," said he. "The tamer of animals, Pioretto, gives in a couple of days a great exhibition. I shall speak to him, that your monkey," said he to François, "and your dog," added he to Guiseppo, "may appear at this occasion in single combat. I will give to the conqueror three thousand francs as reward."

"That proposition is worthy of us, Brutus," said the Italian, quite satisfied, and patted his dog on the head.

François stroked the back of his favorite, and looked disturbed. Three thousand francs was more than he needed for Nanon's dowry; but on the other hand, it certainly did not lie within the limits of possibility that Cesar should come off victorious from such an unequal conflict. Still he must venture the experiment that involved Nanon's future and also the getting rid of Guiseppo. François accepted the offer, after which the gray gentleman requested the address of each, so as to send them word when they were to appear.

A few days afterwards, the owner of the menagerie, Pioretto, announced a grand and extraordinary entertainment, at which the enormous serpent would swallow

two rabbits; the lion lick the hand that gave him a piece of meat; apes and dogs were to perform a great ballet, &c. &c.; at the last a single combat would take place between a little monkey and a large full-blooded mastiff.

A fight between a dog and a monkey, that was really something uncommon; that would certainly be amusing to see. The Parisian does not willingly allow such an enjoyment to slip from his grasp, and the keeper of the menagerie could congratulate himself upon having that evening a full house. The serpent swallowed its rabbits, the lion, tiger and hyena allowed themselves to be played with as if they had been lambs; all went splendidly, and the audience awaited with impatience the appearance of the dog and the monkey. The moment was at hand. On the stage where the apes and dogs had danced, should the battle be fought. First entered Guiseppo with Brutus. A murmur from the public. The dog was so uncommonly large, that he could comfortably bite the head off of his antagonist at the first encounter. Now came the Savoyard, with his little monkey sitting on his shoulder. The boy's face was smiling, he looked quite cheerfully upon the spectators, and the monkey nodded his head. The Savoyard with his monkey stopped right opposite Brutus and his master.

A distance of a few yards lay between the combatants. The contest was to take place with the accompaniment of the orchestra. The signal was given to begin. François lifted Cesar down from his shoulder and gave him two short, and somewhat thick drumsticks, saying:

"Cesar, see that you secure Nanon her dowry, or else die with honor."

The monkey took the sticks and nodded. Guiseppe patted Brutus, with the words:

"Eat up Cesar, and win the prize."

In a flash Brutus fell upon his enemy. The spectators uttered a cry, and took for granted that it was all over with Cesar. The ladies closed their eyes, to avoid seeing the dog tear the monkey to pieces; but when they again opened them, the little creature sat quite composedly upon the dog's head. The audience hurrahed. Cesar had, at the instant Brutus rushed upon him, taken a leap and saved himself by jumping on the back of his assailant.

Brutus made some violent motions with his head and a couple of bold springs to free himself from the creature that had hooked itself fast to him; but then Cesar began to drum unmercifully upon nose, eyes and head with his drumsticks. Brutus threw himself upon his back, Cesar then hopped off, but as soon as

the dog was again upon his feet, he had the monkey once more on his head, and then Cesar continued to drum on him.

Brutus gave wild howls. The blood began to run from his nose. Guiseppo was pale with rage; but was finally obliged, in order to save his dog, to acknowledge that Cesar had conquered. François and Giuseppo went forward to put an end to the strife. The former lifted Cesar upon his shoulder, and the monkey left the scene, followed by the bravos and applause of the audience.

When François came out from the place he met the man in the gray cloak, who had waited for him, to leave his address. François was to present himself at his house on the following day and bring Cesar with him. The owner of the menagerie wished absolutely to buy Cesar; but François hid his pet in his bosom, and declared that nothing but death should separate them. Then the keeper offered the Savoyard an engagement with him, if he would bring his monkey along; but François, who wished to be his own master, declined this also. While these two spoke together, Guiseppo went away, taking the ill-treated Brutus with him. When he passed by François, he said:

"Just you wait—you will have to pay up for this!"

Brutus uttered a howl of pain, and the monkey blinked quite contentedly upon them as they passed.

The next day François presented himself before the gray gentleman, an Englishman of course, and an original besides. He paid the boy the three thousand francs he had promised, and gave François besides the advice to leave Paris immediately, for else he would be exposed to some ill from his vanquished rival. François smiled and asserted that there was no hurry, for Guiseppo had enough to attend to with Brutus's health. The Savoyard now considered that he could do a good business, as they had put in the papers an account of the single combat in which Cesar was victorious.

"But you may be exposed to Guiseppo's revenge," said the Englishman.

"Ah! he is not so mean as to do me any real harm,' affirmed the Savoyard.

"It will be your own fault," answered the Englishman, and bowed his head as a sign that the boy might go; but François stood still and looked half smiling, half embarrassed at his patron. It was apparent that he had something upon his mind.

"Do you wish anything?" asked the Englishman.

"Yes, I wished to ask monsieur something."

"Speak it out; I will refuse your request if it does not suit me."

The Englishman looked at the boy with a bluff, good-humored expression.

"Ah, it is only the request that monsieur would give Guiseppo a little to live upon. You are rich; you proposed the contest which has disabled Brutus for several weeks, and you would be very kind and just, if you gave the poor dog's master a little for himself and the animal. It is too bad for Guiseppo, as he cannot earn anything now, and if monsieur will not give him something, then I shall have to give him a little of my money."

"You are a brave boy," said the Englishman, "and I will take care of Guiseppo until Brutus gets well."

François poured out his thanks, in the warmest and liveliest manner, for the Englishman's great goodness. Cesar, who perceived his master's joy, threw away the almonds he was eating, and began to make the most comical leaps and springs around the Englishman, nodding and grinning at him.

That same day the Englishman went to see Guiseppo. He found the Italian irritated and swearing, engaged

in putting a plaster on Brutus. When Guiseppo saw the Englishman, he made a motion as if to throw himself upon him; but checked himself, and succeeded through a strong effort in restraining his anger.

The eccentric Englishman gave him a small sum of money as a reparation, said to him that he gave him this aid at François's intercession, and promised to give him as much more in the future on condition that Guiseppo did not occasion François any harm while he stayed in Paris.

The Italian promised that the Savoyard should live unmolested by him; and the Englishman left quite satisfied at having in the first place procured himself an amusement in beholding the combat between the dog and the monkey, and then to have done a good deed, and finally, through his gold, to have shielded François from Guiseppo's persecution and thus pre vented a crime.

He took his way towards Madeleine and there saw the victor of yesterday, who was amusing the by-standers with his tricks. François had that day appeared, crying:

"Brutus's conqueror, Cesar, will perform various juggler tricks; come and see the little hero, who slew his big enemy."

He had scarcely had time to shout this, before his

hand-organ was surrounded with people. Pennies and plaudits rained the whole day upon the Savoyard. The gray gentleman gave Brutus's conqueror a guinea. Undisturbed by Guiseppo, François and Cesar could celebrate their triumphs. After a time our little Savoyard had increased his capital quite considerably, and one beautiful Autumn morning he strolled forth, happy and singing, from the great city with his hand-organ and Cesar. He had walked the whole fore-noon, when he stopped to rest in a little wood some miles from Paris. He took out some bread, a couple of apples and a little flask of wine, and then he and Cesar ate dinner together. After this was accomplished, François laid himself down with his head on the turf and went to sleep. Cesar crept up between the opening of François's blouse, to rest as usual upon his master's breast.

François slept the deep sleep of youth, but Cesar had no rest; every little while he stuck out his head from the opening in the blouse and cast spying glances around him. François's slumber had lasted somewhat over an hour, when the sound of steps was heard. Cesar pricked up his ears and looked around him. The steps came nearer and nearer. Cesar leaned his head on one side and looked uneasily about. He pulled his master's hair, pinched his ears and nose

but without having any effect except that the boy made some impatient motions, but did not awake. The monkey now crept out and placed himself near his sleeping master, whom he continued to treat to hair-pullings and pinches, so as to get him awake. Upon the hand-organ which stood near by lay Cesar's weapons in the strife with Brutus, which had now become inseparable from the little hero. The steps were now heard quite near. Cesar had his eyes turned in the direction from whence they came. A man, followed by a large dog, soon became visible between the trees; he walked fast and threw searching glances to right and left. Now his eyes fell upon the sleeping Savoyard, and over his dark countenance flew an expression of fierce exultation.

Guiseppo had promised not to touch François or do him any harm so long as he was in Paris, and he had kept his word; but he had at the same time made another, which he also intended to keep, namely, that François should never return home to Savoy with the marriage portion he had accumulated. He now hastened his steps. Cesar pulled his master's hair with more energy, and François began to make some motions, as if he had concluded to wake up. Now Guiseppo was only a few yards distant. Cesar made a leap upon the hand-organ, took hold of his drum-sticks, and

seemed to await with resolution what was coming next.

"Pounce upon the little devil," cried Guiseppo to Brutus, at the same moment that Cesar jumped on the organ; but Brutus had no sooner caught sight of the monkey with his drum-sticks than he gave a pitiful howl and set off in the woods as fast as his legs could carry him.

Guiseppo muttered an oath between his teeth and threw himself upon the Savoyard, who, at Brutus's howl, had rushed up quite bewildered. The Italian had put his hand within his blouse, and cried to François:

"Out with the money you have got, or I will nail you and your monkey fast to the hand-organ!"

He made a motion to seize hold of the Savoyard, but just then something flew upon his head and held fast to his hair in a manner scarcely agreeable.

"You cursed little devil!" roared Guiseppo, and drew out the hand he had held within his blouse, aiming a blow at the monkey, who had placed himself right in the midst of his forest of dark locks. The blow failed to hit. The monkey slipped down upon his neck, but gave him at the same time a drum-beat with his sticks over the temples. Again Guiseppo aimed a blow; but François threw himself upon the lifted arm. There now began a struggle between the

little agile Savoyard and the Italian, which would certainly have ended fatally for the former had not Cesar all the while belabored Guiseppo's face with his drum-sticks in such an effective manner, that François succeeded in wresting the dagger from his enemy's hand, when the latter of necessity let go of the boy, in order to defend himself from the monkey's diabolic attack.

The Savoyard realized that his and Cesar's only safety depended upon a united onslaught upon Guiseppo. He therefore sustained the monkey's brave efforts through an attack of his fists against Guiseppo's head. The latter, quite confused from Cesar's drum ming on his temples, eyes and nose, as well as through François's vigorous blows in his face, was seized with such a giddiness that he fell backwards, and did not for a long while recover his senses.

When he again came to himself, he was unable to open more than one eye, and the blood ran from his nose and mouth. He sat up and looked around him. Savoyard, monkey and hand-organ were gone; but Brutus lay at his side and looked with an air of compassion upon his master's disfigured face.

Guiseppo's eyes and head smarted. He murmured, while he passed his hand over them :

"That monkey is not an ordinary animal, but a

devil. The Savoyard is decidedly in league with Satan, and stands under his protection. With the devil I will not fight, and we shall therefore never meet more."

But this happened, however, although after many years had elapsed, and when Guiseppo had passed through so many vicissitudes, that his love for Nanon and his hatred to her brother were forgotten. François arrived safely in Savoy with the dowry which the father of Nanon's lover had demanded before he consented to their marriage. François's sister was happily married, and never forgot that she had her brother and little Cesar to thank for her felicity. The last-named was yet for many years a source of income to François, who every Spring left Savoy with his hand-organ and his little pet. During one of these trips he met Guiseppo, who was then a beggar in rags. He had been guilty of some offence which had drawn upon him the penalty of the law and converted him into an actual wretch.

François shared with him his little income, and procured him a couple of dogs to train, so that he could begin his former occupation. After the last meeting with Guiseppo, Cesar lost his health and had no longer any peace; it was as if the monkey had constantly feared something. François returned home

with his favorite, who shortly after died and was stuffed after his death. Even in this form he remained an object of François's affection. After Cesar's death his master never more left his native place.

THE SEASONS.

I.

SPRING and Winter sat beside each other on a high rock. They had already sat there several days and spoken confidentially. They were so glad to be together; it was natural, for are they not brothers, who only meet once a year, and then but for a very brief space?

"You already look old, brother," said the Spring, "when you come stormily to meet me in your great fur cloak and bear-skin cap, with your beard and eyebrows full of hoar-frost; but now, when you sit beside me and I look into your beaming eyes, hear your youthful bass voice and see the mischievous smile play around your fresh lips, I understand that you are eternally young, like me."

"All youth is not tender," said the Winter; "the four gates of heaven through which we have passed, lead to different paths and different callings." The

Winter asked the Spring to present his greetings to the Summer, who is also his brother, but whom he never meets.

The Storm, Winter's vassal, drove the gray snow-cloud before him, for they were going to move on and in distant lands build up Winter's royal castle, where he resides with the cold snow-queen. The Storm goes out and in there through the open window-frames, and the god of dreams sits inside and stitches on a green and white ground with threads of gold, spring dreams and love dreams for humanity, to cheer their long winter nights.

Winter's whole wardrobe was packed up. Sprightly zephyrs played in the dale; they hastened to awake the slumbering blades of grass, shook the bare branches and whispered:

"*Spring has come!*" They tapped at all the little insects' sleeping-rooms. "Wake up, Spring has come!" The birds had already heard it, and there went a twitter from tree to tree: "Spring has come!"

Then the morning twilight of the first spring day disappeared; the sun raised himself from his gorgeous cloud-bed; he was adorned with a mantle of purple and gold, in order to greet his beautiful friend, the Spring. Winter rose; he shook his great wings, so that his brother stood powdered over with snow.

flakes. They laughed, they kissed each other, and Winter flew away, far over land and sea.

We know not whether we shall see him again, for we do not live for ever, like the Spring.

II.

The woods stood adorned in brightest verdure, the snow-drops, anemones, cowslips and tulips were strewn over gardens, fields and meadows. Glad herds grazed in rich pastures. Wherever the eye turned there was life and joy. The bees hummed, the butterflies fluttered round the flowers and the birds had each in their way sung about the Spring and their own happy life, full of love and gladness. Last of all the Spring had created the fragrant rose, and with this, his work was ended.

Then Summer came flying down to earth with the rays of the morning sun, and the two brothers greeted each other with a glowing kiss.

The Spring had put up his loveliest rainbow, to receive the Summer with all honor, and under this triumphal arch the two sons of heaven wandered hand in hand over flowery fields and talked of past and coming times, and their smile transfigured heaven and earth.

The sun shone warmer and warmer over their heads. "Now you can take your departure!" said the Summer; "I shall finish what you have begun. Your children shall I tend with burning love; I will ripen to fruit, what with you was only blooming. Life must have nourishment. To me it is granted to strive with more ardor and work with more power."

The Spring, silent and mourning, took leave of the flowers and flew to the east with his zephyrs.

With ardent zeal the Summer began his activity; in the harvest fields grew up and ripened golden ears, and the fruit trees bent beneath the burden of their fruit. But the roses withered, the nightingale was hushed, and through all nature went a secret longing for an eternal Spring.

III.

The Summer had now been occupied early and late. His works were almost all completed; he had now fallen asleep in a beautiful dale, under the shadow of high trees. Then came the Autumn from a long journey. He found his brother immediately. They had much to say to each other. The Autumn was in the habit of reserving for himself a few fine summer days; for he so liked to have all nature, full of joy, look gratefully up to him for a beautiful day.

Now he stood and regarded his sleeping brother; but the latter felt a cool breeze over his glowing cheeks and he awoke. Surprised, he sprang up to meet his brother and gave him his hand. "You must have come too early," said he, as he searched in his almanac. The seasons always have one with them, but it is not the same as the astronomers issue. "But no, it is time for you; I must prepare to leave." He beckoned to some merry sprites; they came with a cup of nectar. The Summer offered the cup to the Autumn, and the latter turned his eyes with a dreamy look upon his brother and the whole country around, and emptied the cup. The brothers ascended the hill and sat down on a block of granite. The Summer laid his warm hand on the Autumn's cold one, and looked him in the eye with indescribable tenderness. A little while they sat there in familiar conversation; they spoke of the home over there in the shining sun, where their cradle had stood and from whence they had come. "And when the thousands and thousands of years have elapsed, during which we shall wander around the earth, and we are allowed to lay down our staff in the temple of the sun: then I shall see Spring again, the beloved brother, and press him to my heart;" so said the Autumn. And the Summer answered: "A thousand times has he told me to greet

you; he also longs to see you again. I, too, will sometime meet the Winter, who is now so inaccessible to me, and for whom I so often pine."

High above their heads flew large flocks of birds. The Summer looked up at them smilingly, but in the Autumn's eye glistened a tear. He knew that the birds flew where the Spring then prevailed.

Once more the Summer pressed his pale brother to his breast, then flew upward and boarded his proud frigate, which is built of dark thunder-clouds. She lay at anchor, waiting for him over the tops of the hills. Lovingly, benignly, he again looked down at the earth, then seized the rudder and set out for the far-off temperate zones.

The Autumn now spread a white, cool veil over land and sea, mounted his throne and commenced his reign with a melancholy smile.

IV.

And he had helped humanity, the friendly Autumn; the last fruits were gathered in. Many looks, full of devout gratitude, which were raised to heaven to there seek the all-good Giver, had met his eyes. And he had stretched out his arms and on his finger points lifted humanity's gratitude above the clouds, up to the eternal light.

But more and more serious became his aspect and the furrows in his brow grew deeper; day and night he went around and snatched, now one by one, now in masses, the variegated leaves from the trees, and threw them about as sport for the wind and waves. Perhaps he did this not without pain, for the Spring had awakened them with kisses from his warm lips and carefully developed them in the sun-light.

The woods had now become less dense, but the sky darker. The Autumn took the wreath of asters from his brow and threw it too among the pale leaves which the wind drove over the fields. He drew out the dark nights longer and longer, and shortened the days more and more.

In the churchyard he goes around during the cool, moonlight nights; he has known all who slumber there, for most of them have seen him at least once. He spreads a thick leaf coverlid over the graves. He knows that the Spring will one day cover them with young verdure.

He flies up to the hill-tops and assembles his host of clouds. Heavy rains pour down on the earth for whole nights and days.

Alone he goes to the desolate sea-shore. The birds of prey fly shrieking up from their hiding-places; they recognise the Autumn and know that he comes

to rouse the Storm. He cries in the clefts of the hills: "wake up and serve me;" and like a lament sounds his cry through the clefts. The North-storm comes forth; he throws back his gray mantle and plunges his cold arm into the depths of the sea; he lashes the waves and casts the white spray far and wide and up to the clouds, while he laughs wildly in the face of the leaden sky. The other storm-winds also wake up; they fly inward; the forest trees bend humbly before them; howling and whistling they whirl round human abodes, and plaintively steal in and out through the dilapidated doors and windows of old castles, as if they there sought departed relatives. They fly up again and tear the clouds asunder, like old garments, but then reunite them, so that they hover like huge mountains over the earth.

And the Autumn sits on a high summit, from whence he can survey both land and sea; he sees how the wild waves dash the vessels against the rocks, how human beings toil and struggle with the elements, and how the ships sink with their rich cargoes; he sees how the billows play with the fragments of the wreck, how they throw them to each other as if playing ball, until finally here a plank, a mast, there a corpse, is flung by the billows upon the strand.

But the storm-winds know that a still sterner master is approaching, and wearily creep back in their clefts.

The Autumn rises; the furrows in his brow disappear; a smile flutters about his lips and his eyes beam with the fire of eternal youth; for before him stands Winter. The latter throws back his cape, covered with hoar-frost, and presses his brother to his icy breast. The season's clock, the starry heavens, unveils its glittering silver face, and the brothers look upward. "Tarry a while," said the Winter, "tell me something about Summer; does he still think of his cold brother?" They talked much with each other, but we know not what they said. When Autumn and Winter converse at night, it is cold; who can then listen?

All nature was still and quiet, as if waiting for the Autumn's departure, but no one has ever heard it. When the sun went up, Winter sat alone on the heights.

And the fields were white, the billows lay fettered; for Winter reigned. Vegetation sank into a deep slumber to be quickened by the touch of Spring. Millions of little creatures had hidden themselves, believing that the Winter could not find them; but he knew their hiding-places and covered them with the sheltering snow.

Human beings, when they stepped from their dwellings in the morning, said to each other: "Now we have Winter." They put on fur cloaks and made large fires in the chimney-place. The children ran down to try whether the ice would soon be strong enough to bear them. The rich and well-to-do went to the poor and asked them: "How is it with you, my friend? Do you freeze? Have you warm clothing? Have you bread for yourself and your children? Come, we will help you; for Spring, Summer and Autumn have blessed us." Human beings know full well that the seasons are the Almighty's glad servants: why should they not be the same? They know that the seasons love each other; why should they not do so, too?

And Christmas came, the feast of light and love, in which God has bestowed a far greater blessing upon humanity, than He could give them through all the glorious seasons. Christmas is Winter's happiest time. When childish hearts leap with joy and parents raise their thoughts in gratitude and prayer to heaven, when mortals take pity upon their needy fellow-beings, then Winter's glance also beams with delight.

The fetters which bind the waves, he forges stronger and stronger; but the veil of night he lifts a little

earlier every morning, and in the evening he closes day's portals later and later. He must place day and night in equilibrium before Spring comes, and this cannot be done all at once.

The old grandmother, the Earth, is satisfied with her warm mantle of snow, but the trees and bushes stand naked and act as if they were freezing; the Winter often strews great handfuls of flakes over their cold heads, so that they look as if covered with blossoms; then Winter laughs and rejoices over his smartness; he climbs the hill and cries to the Sun: "I have played Spring!" and the Sun smiles kindly at him from the clear blue sky.

But the Spring, the true Spring, is again there. The brothers sit together on a high eminence—and our story about them begins anew.

GRANDFATHER'S STORY.

THE day draws to an end and twilight gathers. After the day's work, it is a pleasant rest to throw one's self down with a lighted pipe and devote the remainder of the evening to the perusal of some interesting and instructive book. The industrious father of the family finds in this way an agreeable recompense for his labor, and the mind is refreshed for a new and profitable activity.

Just as the old grandfather settles down to enjoy his book, tiny hands fumble at the door and a tender voice cries "Grandpa!" When the old man opens the door, his granddaughter, a little girl about four years old, trots into the room. She seems to be seeking something for amusement, perhaps some goodies that grandfather has brought home from the village. At last she goes up to the old man and regards him with expectant looks, as she lays her little arms on his knee.

"Well, what do you wish, my child?"

"Dear grandpa, tell me a story; then you will be so nice!"

"Have you been good to-day?"

"Yes, yes; a little story!"

"Well, I will try to think if I remember any; come here!"

And the old man takes the little pet on his knee and commences a story with the well known beginning: "There was once a——"

There was once a little girl who sat alone in a cold, dark garret and wept. She had neither father nor mother; she was poor and forsaken. But the sun, which was then setting, peeped forth from a cloud and spread a crimson light in the little attic. The door opened softly, and a little bent old woman stuck in her head.

"Come in, Aunty," said the little girl pleasantly.

"I am tired, may I sit on your little stool?" asked the old woman; "will you give me something to drink, for I am so thirsty?"

The child took her little bowl of milk and gave it to the old woman. That was to have been her evening meal; but she was such a good little girl. When the old woman had drank the milk, she seemed to become more beautiful and friendly; the sun shone

on her silver hair and made her cheeks red. She sang softly to herself:

"But I would like to know
Why you weep, little Greta!"

"Why," said the little girl, "I am so lonesome and have no one to play with. The watch-dog is so old and sensible, and the hens have their chicks to attend to. Nobody teaches me anything; I can do nothing for uncle's comfort; he goes to the ale-house, and when he comes home, I am afraid of him; I may well weep. Often I am hungry; I am poor and have nothing."

"You have much that you are not aware of," said the old woman. "Will you believe my words? You have ten servants."

Greta made big eyes. She looked around her.

"See here," said the old woman, taking her hand and pointing to the little fingers. "They are called Tummetott, Slickepott, Langeman, Gullebrand and Lillepyt;—have you heard anything new?"

Greta looked at her hand and—was she dazzled by the sunlight, or how was it? It seemed to her that every one of her fingers was a little person with a little face. Tummetott was short and thick, looked meditative and wise; his neighbor had a more pert and conspicuous appearance; the solemn Langeman

was adorned by the old woman with a little silver helmet, and Gullebrand at his side was allowed to wear a little gold ring as a belt round the waist and a silver shield. Lillepyt looked like a boy, and bowed, laughing.

"Say now that you have no servants, skilful and good, if you only allow them to learn something. Only try."

Greta clapped her hands. The fingers now looked as usual, but the little thimble and sewing-ring still remained.

The old woman kissed little Greta and went away.

The little girl ate dry bread and drank water; but when she looked at her hands she laughed at her small servants. "Now, you shall help me make uncle's bed!" cried she gladly, and they all hastened to lift the pillows and turn the coverlid, and Lillepyt did what he could.

The next morning when Greta awoke, she told Tummetott and all his four companions to come and dress her and comb her hair. They had never done it so well before. Her hair shone like the cat's when he has just licked himself, and her shoe-strings were carefully tied. After she had said her morning prayer, she ran out to greet her uncle. It snowed

terribly, and the wind rustled the trees, so that it looked as if they shook their heads at all who went by.

"Do not go to the village to-day, uncle," said Greta, "stay at home with me; I have ten little servants, who will get dinner for you."

"What is the child talking about?" said Lars a little testily; but he sat down to split kindling-wood and then began to work on a fish-net, which had long lain in the corner.

But Greta ran to the hen and said: "Have you laid any eggs?" And the hen clucked contentedly. There lay a snow-white egg in the nest. Tummetott and Slickepott carried it immediately into the house, broke it into the bowl, where the milk had been, and then Greta ran out and commanded her small servants to bind together a little whip. The tiny creatures worked so hard that they became red and warm, and beat the egg to a froth; then Greta took a little flour and stirred it in, and some milk which she had got at a neighbor's. Ah! now the frying-pan stood on the fire, which blazed merrily; a little bit of butter was dropped in it, so that it sizzled. Yes, Tummetott, Slickepott, Langeman, Gullebrand were all good cooks, and Lillepyt served as scullion. What a hurry they were in! and how much they could do—if they only tried!

There stood the dinner-table spread with a coarse but clean table-cloth, smoking potatoes and a large herring, warm milk and the magnificent pan-cakes.

Uncle was astonished at Greta; he ate right heartily to her great satisfaction, and while she was clearing away the things, she tried to think how she should be able to keep him home, far from the wicked ale-house.

When it grew dark uncle took his cap, and Greta knew where he meant to go. She found his tobacco-pipe, filled it, lighted it, and then asked him coaxingly to stay until he had smoked it. Then she kindled the fire, seated herself on a stool at his feet and began to tell stories. At first he paid no attention; but soon he was amused, and forgot himself for a while, in order to listen to the "silly talk." When he again made a motion to go, she asked him to crack some nuts which she had got; she took down the old dusty violin from the corner and begged him to play a little. He tuned up, kling! klang! until he himself was in good tune, and Greta saw with wonder how his Langeman and Gullebrand and all their comrades leaped about the strings and made such rapid motions to draw forth tones. Greta herself now began to dance, and kept asking for more music. until it became late. "It is scarcely worth while

to go now," said he half vexed, and laid down the violin. But it seemed right comfortable to him to sit at home in the quiet cottage, when the storm raged outside.

Oh! what a hurry the little fingers were now in to get supper ready, fondle her uncle and make his bed! How glad little Greta was over her conquest and her ten tiny servants!

Greta became large, and her little hands could do more and more. She sewed and knitted, she spun and wove so diligently. Such bright, scoured tins had no one else, such a white table and floor were not to be found in any other cottage. Her uncle had now long since broken himself from going to the ale-house: he thrived in his neat, cosy home, where the industrious little girl bustled about so gladly.

"How can you keep things so nice, Greta, you who have no servant?" asked a rich peasant's daughter.

"Ah! I have ten," said Greta roguishly; "they weave and spin, scrub and scour: they are never idle."

By-and-by a smart young peasant courted Greta, and then Gullebrand had a gold ring to wear.

The same day the wedding was to take place, the old woman come again and had with her a thimble

and sewing-ring of purest gold, and thus equipped, Langeman and Gullebrand moved still more handily.

Greta thanked the old woman for her words about the little servants, and showed all the blessing they had brought in the house. She said to all poor little girls, that they must not drop their hands, but try to see what they could learn to do. Some are writers, others painters or wood-cutters, and much, much else. But with aspiration in the heart and the fingers set in motion, blessing is not far off.

Her uncle tuned his violin, and all the wedding-guests began to dance, as merrily as at Christmas. Many nice hands met each other in the games which they played, and one lazy boy went blushing up to the old woman and gave her a hearty hand-shake in token that his Tummetott and the rest would yet be of use.

Uncle kissed the young bride and said: "She has no other dowry than that which her clever hands have procured, but my blessing I give her richly."

Greta became happy and her home comfortable: the ten little servants worked there zealously, and when evening came, they clasped each other mutely, and Greta thanked God for being able to work.

A LEARNED BOY.

"I DECLARE, how wise and sensible that Hegesippus is!" exclaimed Mamsell Justina, striking her hands together. "I tell you what, it is something to be so learned! It is different with poor Knut."

Hegesippus had no time to answer: he sat with a microscope before him, examining the hind leg of a stag-beetle. He was twelve years old and went to the high school, therefore he was so wise; but poor Knut was fourteen and went to the industrial school, therefore he was so unlearned.

Mamsell Justina was a good-hearted housekeeper, who served for two hundred marks a year, her food and shelter, and a pair of buskins the first of May and a calico apron every Christmas. Hegesippus was the apple of her eye, and she had repeated to him every day, from the time he wore frocks, that he was much wiser than other children, and especially much more

sensible than poor Knut. What we hear every day, we cannot help believing, and Hegesippus was perfectly convinced that such was the case, and would have been just the same, even if no one had told him so.

He now shut one eye, made his hair stand up and said: "Have you seen my collection of eggs, Justina?"

Justina had seen his collection of eggs seventy-seven times, but she answered: "Why, you find time for everything, you dear boy!"

"Come here, Justina, and you shall see them!" said Hegesippus, and then he showed her a long paper box, containing eggs of all sizes, each in its division, on cotton, with regular labels. There were eggs of all kinds of birds, from the big eagle down to the little songster in the woods: blue, gray, white, brown, speckled eggs of crows, magpies, starlings, blackbirds, grosbeaks, bullfinches and others, and they were all only blown-out shells, with a little hole at each end. It looked like a receiving tomb, with small coffins for dead birdlings.

While Justina was expressing her wonder and admiration, Lotta came trotting in. She was seven years old, and knew nothing but her A B C book, and scarcely that. The little girl looked curiously at the

rare collection of eggs, and asked where Sippus had got all that.

"Sippus or Sippa yourself!" snarled her brother. "The eggs I have got from other boys."

"But isn't it a sin to do harm to the little birds' nests?" asked Lotta innocently.

Hegesippus snuffled—he had the snuffles most of the time, because he always went in his over-coat and galoches, and besides it sounded so learned to talk through the nose. Furthermore, he did not trouble himself to answer such a silly question. But Lotta did not allow herself to be scared.

"Do you know," said she, "I think it is a great sin."

"You think!" said Hegesippus contemptuously. "That comes because you are so terribly stupid."

"But Knut thinks as I do," answered Lotta dauntlessly.

"I believe as much," said her brother compassionately "Knut, poor fellow, was going to begin to collect eggs too, and so he blew out a hen's egg; but he never did any more, for he thought it was a wrong to the little birds. I will tell you, Lotta, that the birds have a different bony structure from the mammals, and the general qualities with birds' bones are their above-mentioned firmness and lightness; besides

they have extremities in three parts and a different alimentary canal, and a very dissimilar skull, and a round neck-joint, and possess to a certain degree the power of imagination and constructive instinct, and build horn-shaped nests—"

"Oh no," said Lotta; "all the birds' nests that I have seen, have been round as turnips."

"Well, yes," replied Hegesippus loftily; "horn-shaped or turnip-shaped, it is all the same. The birds of prey have perhaps turnip-shaped nests, but there are sparrow-birds and climbing-birds and hen-birds and ostriches and cranes and swimming-birds—"

"And roosters!" chimed in Mamsell Justina, who was perfectly carried away with her favorite's immense learning. "Dear Lotta, there is nothing that Hegesippus does not know. He knows everything."

"He collects eggs, and he has never seen a bird's nest!" laughed Lotta.

Hegesippus became angry. "I can find birds' nests whenever I wish to," said he; "I have not yet any chatterer's egg or nightingale's egg. But I will hunt for them myself. You will see this evening, when I come home."

"But you never go in the woods, you go and walk on the sidewalks, as the doctor said that you must take exercise," objected Lotta.

"No, dear Hegesippus, do not go in the woods, you might take cold," warned Mamsell Justina. "Remember that there are snakes there!"

"Snakes belong to the reptilians and have a very long-stretched body, and digestion proceeds slowly," uttered Hegesippus with his incredible learning.

"He has never seen a live snake!" laughed Lotta.

This irritated Hegesippus. He put on his thick winter over-coat and took with him Lütken's Zoology, from which he derived his learning. Besides he took his papa's cane, to kill the snakes that had such a long back-bone and such poor digestion, and then he bent his steps beyond the town to look for nightingale's eggs, for he happened to have a holiday that afternoon.

"No, wait, fasten the lowest button of your coat!" cried Mamsell Justina after him.

But Hegesippus was already far away. He walked with solemn steps through the town, past the toll-gate, over the bridge, over the road, over the dike, and then he came to the woods. Here it was more uncomfortable to work his way: hillocks, twigs and stones, juniper bushes and spider-webs, ant-hills and gnats. Hegesippus became tired, and especially very warm. He sat down on a stone to rest, and wondered that no nightingale or chatterer had built its nest on the stone.

While he was sitting there something rustled in the air, and a large eagle pounced down on a squirrel in the nearest pine. But the eagle entangled its claws in the branches of the tree, the squirrel took a leap, fell right in Hegesippus's arms and then hid itself, trembling, behind the stone.

There is no greater pleasure than to listen to the great living nature and try to discover its secrets. But we must do that ourselves, and not recite from books which we do not understand. Books are good to show the way, but are of no benefit, if one does not know how to use them.

Hegesippus was now for the first time in the woods. Instead of observing the growths and living creatures, regarding the ways of the ant and teaching himself to recognise each bird by its note, he came there full of learning, and believed that he knew everything from the book. Ah, you wise Hegesippus!

He was not the least surprised. He took out his book and began to examine the squirrel: "'The hippopotamus is a large, fat, thick-bellied, short-necked and very short-legged animal.' Ah ha! that four-footed creature is a hippopotamus. But what can the bird in the tree be? I will look—'The parrot is distinguished by its beak, which is unusually short, high and thick.' Correct. It is a parrot. But if it

should be a nightingale?—'The nightingale has not a very long bill.' The bill is rather short, seems to me—'A little tooth inside the end of the upper bill.' Well, that corresponds with the bird in the tree. Thus it is a nightingale after all. That is very remarkable; I must write it down."

Hegesippus took out his note-book—learned men never go in the woods without a note-book—and wrote the following, in a large hand:

"*May 15th, Lotta was again stupid. I went in the woods. I saw a nightingale, which pounced down on a hippopotamus.*"

N. B. How delightful it is to know everything from books!

HE WHO KNEW ALMOST EVERYTHING.

CONTINUATION OF "A LEARNED BOY."

"AH!" said Hegesippus, as he sat there for the first time on a stone in the woods, and was so immensely pleased with himself and his great discoveries—"Ah! how stupid the woods are, and how wise am I! The large woods do not know what I know. The large woods have no books: there are no twigs and no animals that even know A B C; still less spell and read plainly. The woods grow and grow, and do not know that two times two are four. But I know much more; I know almost everything. There is very little left, which I do not know; but when I enter college, I will know everything there is, and perhaps a little more, too; and when I graduate, I will know everything that is not, and perhaps a little more. There, that's the way the matter stands, poor Wood!"

The poor Wood made no reply; it listened with

astonishment to such incomprehensible learning. It stood there so silent and serious, as if it also wished to learn something from the great wisdom. Perhaps the pine wished to learn how to grow, the wild-cherry how to bloom, the cloud how to rain, the brook how to hop like a bird over the stones, and—the nightingale how to pounce down on a hippopotamus.

"Well, now I must hunt for a bird's-nest," said Hegesippus, and began to walk on. After a while he came to a meadow, and in it was a barn. Above the barn-door, close under the low roof, hung something which decidedly must be a bird's-nest, for it looked as if it were made of gray paper and was almost horn-shaped. "Didn't I say that all birds'-nests were horn-shaped?" exclaimed Hegesippus. "Just think, if it were a nightingale's nest!"

And he began to poke with papa's cane in the gray horn.

Scarcely had he made a hole through the gray paper, before there crept something out: first one, and then one more, and then ten and twenty, nay, perhaps a hundred. But it was not nightingales, it was wasps—and soon Hegesippus felt something sting on his hand, then on his cheek, then on his nose—he had a whole malignant swarm of wasps upon him! Then the hero became chap-fallen, beat about him

with papa's cane, and began to run with all his might. But the swarm of wasps flew faster than he could run, and persecuted him so dreadfully, that he neither heard nor saw, but only scampered, and before he knew it, he lay in a large muddy ditch, full of water.

It was well that the wasps could not swim. When they saw their enemy lying in the ditch, they gradually began to hum back to mend their broken nest; and if the boy had understood their language, he would have heard them say to each other: "That fellow there we have chastised well, so that he will take good care not to disturb our nest another time."

Wet and swollen, Hegesippus crawled out of the ditch. He had no further desire to look for birds'-nests. The wisest thing he could now do, was to paddle off home. But this was easier said than done. He was in the woods for the first time, and had no idea which way he had come. He followed his nose, however, and the nose is a poor guide, for whichever way one turns, the nose constantly points ahead. And ahead went Hegesippus, the nose in front, but yet he went astray and came continually further into the wood. The shadow of the trees began to fall longer on the turf, the sun sank behind the tops of the firs, the gnats became more and more annoying, the song

of birds ceased, and only the redstart and thrush still warbled their melodious notes, while the corn-crake from the dike sent forth its lonely, grating cry. Hegesippus was tired, hungry and wet, but yet he trudged along over hillocks and stones, and when he had walked around in this way several hours, he found himself precisely by the same ditch from whence he had commenced his homeward course.

Then he lost courage, sat down and began to cry. But while he was crying, he fell asleep from weariness at the edge of the ditch.

Now Hegesippus must have dreamed, for how else could any such thing have happened to so learned a boy? It seemed to him that the little squirrel, which was a hippopotamus, came to him and asked: "Why do you cry?" "Ah!" said the boy, "I may well cry; I can't find the way out of the large wood."

"But you know everything, do you not?" continued the squirrel, that was a hippopotamus.

"Not exactly everything, but *almost everything!*" sighed Hegesippus.

"Good-bye to you," said the squirrel.

A few minutes passed; then something swept through the air, and the eagle, that was a nightingale, asked: "Why do you cry?" "May I not cry," an-

swered Hegesippus, "when I do not know how I shall get home from the wood?"

"But you know almost everything!" said the eagle, that was a nightingale.

"No, I don't know almost everything precisely, but I know a whole lot of things."

"Good-bye to you," said the eagle.

Now came a swarm of wasps, and asked the same question: "Why do you cry?"

"Haven't I reason to cry for this and that?" said Hegesippus as before.

"But you know a whole lot of things!" buzzed the swarm of wasps.

"I don't know such a very great deal now," sighed Hegesippus; "but I certainly know something anyhow, even if ever so little."

"Good-bye to you," said the wasps.

The boy was now alone again. But then came the whole large Wood to him: the tall firs, the low willow bushes, the small mountain-ash slips, the wild flowers, heath and crake-berries, and all asked kindly: "Why do you cry?"

"Haven't I reason to cry," answered Hegesippus, "when I do not know how I shall get home from the wood?"

"But you know a little something anyhow!" said the large Wood.

"Yes," said the boy; "but about the way, I know just nothing."

"Good-bye to you," said the Wood.

"No, wait a little," said the boy. "Be so extremely good as to show me the way home again? My over-coat, my galoches and papa's cane remained in the ditch; I am freezing to death."

"But you know a little something anyhow!" said the Wood.

"No, dear Wood, I assure you that I know nothing at all," sighed Hegesippus in the distress of his heart.

"Are you really so incomprehensibly ignorant?" asked the Wood.

"I am whatever you choose, if I only get home," said the boy.

"No, wait," said the Wood, "no prevarication! Confess honestly, that you know nothing at all about nature's true life and being, nay, far less than the smallest needle on the branches of the pine, even if you should seven times repeat a lesson from the book!"

Hegesippus drew a tremendous sigh, for it costs something, when one has just been so immensely

learned, to all at once acknowledge one's self to be stupider than a chip. There was no help for it, the truth must out:

"Certainly, I am somewhat stupid, but—"

"Ah, you wish to higgle?" growled the Wood.

"No," said Hegesippus, and the sweat stood on his brow, although he was very cold;—"it is true and certain, dear Wood, that I am frightfully stupid, yes, such a blockhead am I, that I believe myself to know nothing at all. Can any person be stupider than I?"

"But poor Knut is surely more stupid still?" asked the Wood.

"Ah no, dear Wood, never believe it! Knut is much wiser than I: Knut has never thought that he knew almost everything. Oh! how stupid Hegesippus is!"

"That is well," said the Wood. "Now I will send Echo out to proclaim it."

And at the same instant Echo was heard to cry from all directions: "Oh! how stupid Hegesippus is! Oh! how stupid Hegesippus is!"

Hegesippus did not hear more, for when he woke up again, he lay at home in his own bed, and had been sick two weeks from his severe cold, but he was now better. And the first thing he recollected, was the same words which Echo had repeated to the whole

wood: "Oh! how stupid Hegesippus is! Oh! how stupid Hegesippus is!"

"It is remarkable," said Knut, who stood beside the bed: "just those same words did we hear cried in the wood, when Justina and I were searching for you half the night, without finding anything but your over-coat, your galoches and papa's cane. You must have talked in your sleep, for directly afterwards we found you fast asleep not far from the ditch."

"I must certainly have talked in my night-cap," answered Hegesippus, feeling very flat.

"But what in heaven's name is it that you have written in your note-book? 'A nightingale, which pounced down on a hippopotamus!' Never in the world could you have been in earnest?"

Hegesippus lay quite still a while, and now began to comprehend his whole adventure. "Yes, you see, Knut," said he, much confused, "the amount of it is, that I needed something in black and white,—I needed a regular written testimony upon how stupid I was, when I believed that I knew almost everything. Therefore I suppose I have written down something very silly, in order that I might believe my own words."

"Ah! what is that he is saying, the dear boy?" said Mamsell Justina. "Is he not the nicest and most

learned boy in the whole school? How can Knut, poor fellow, presume to call such a learned boy stupid?"

"Hush, now be silent, Justina," said Hegesippus. "Knut is much better and wiser; you see, Justina, he has never been haughty, but I have been a downright fool."

"Well, well," said Knut, good-naturedly, "you may have been anything whatsoever, but you are now wise, Hegesippus. For I have heard said, that the wisest and most learned here in the world are just they who acknowledge that God alone is wise, and we are only poor insignificant bunglers, who know little or nothing of God's beautiful creation."

"Yes, that is so, and now Sippus will never do any more harm to the little birds'-nests!" exclaimed Lotta, clapping her hands with delight.

THE FOUNT'S TEARS.

"I WAS born in the woods," related a Stream, as he cast himself down steep rocks. "My mother is a little fount, so beautiful, so beautiful. You should only see her. Human beings compare her to a maiden's blue eye, full of tears. Heaven is reflected in it."

And the little rills, fed by a snow-drift on the mountain, listened to the Stream's narrative.

"How pretentiously he talks about his origin!" said they among themselves. "He ought to be a good son, to describe his mother so finely. Where are you going, dear sir?" they asked the Stream.

"To the sea!" answered the latter. "To the great, open sea. That, you may believe, is not less grand than to journey to the king. Come along with me."

The rills looked at each other an instant. "He would never cheat us," thought they. "No indeed!

He, who is such a modest great one, such a noble being, can certainly never cheat us. We are the poor children of a snow-drift on the mountain. Here we will dry up on the sand-banks. We will go with you. To the sea! To the sea!" They only took a short leap, and straightway their waters were united with the Stream's.

But how different it became for the poor rills from what they had anticipated! They were now truly with the wolf, and therefore had also to howl with him. They dashed down precipices, whereby they struck their breasts against sharp stones, so that they sent forth spray from pain.

"One who joins the game, must stand the game," said the Stream.

When they sometimes came to a valley, they had a chance to take breath. Then they started off again, frantically, recklessly.

"Are we not at the sea now?" they inquired one evening, when they caught a glimpse of a large body of water ahead of them.

"Far from it," was the answer. "This is only a lake. It is at least a hundred miles yet to the sea."

"At least a hundred miles!" repeated they. "That is the length of the largest river. It is terrible."

"I will tell you about the Stream's childhood

and youthful adventures," said an old willow tree, which grew at the mouth of the lake. "You know that his mother is a spring in the woods, and that she is so beautiful, the little blue-eye. But you do not know how worried she is about her son, the wild fellow. He began his career by destroying a little dam that some children had built. As he grew larger his course has been still more unconscionable. Even in his brook days he enticed several credulous streamlets as well as a silly bog to join with him in an overflow; and when he became a river, he conquered the heart of a melancholy girl, so that she threw herself in his arms and ended her life. Besides this, he has made an enamored poet share the young girl's fate. He is now dragging you with him to ruin, for to ruin he is rushing as fast as he can. Separate from him!"

"What nonsense you talk!" roared the Stream, who had listened unobserved to the old willow tree's story to the rills. "I will teach you what it costs to spread evil reports about me!" With this he undermined the willow tree's roots, so that it fell down on the bank, but still verdant even in its fall, like one who dies for his well-meaning.

"Take warning, rills, from the old willow tree's example!" exclaimed the Stream. "Here in the lake we will rest a short time. The hundred miles

will then not keep us long on our way to the sea. Only consider, that we are flowing to the large, broad sea! It is, as I once before said, no less grand than to travel to the king. Come along! Come along!"

What could the rills do except follow and keep silent?

In the lake, however, they were not in such a hurry. It had become winter. The Stream drew a coverlid of ice over himself and lay down to sleep. And the snow-flakes danced in innumerable circles over him as he lay freezing in his bed. "Hu—u!" howled the storm. It was now so cold and bleak. But after the tempest God sent the sunshine. Spring drew near, and the sun's rays grew warm. The snow-drifts and ice began to melt.

One fine day a peasant came driving over the lake. "Get up!" cried he to the horses; and the heavy load glided swiftly over the frozen waters. But when the peasant came to the Stream's bed, the latter awoke in a passion, as one starts up, who is disturbed in his sleep. And the Stream threw off his ice-coverlid and broke up, frothing with rage.

"Away with the baggage, that disturbs my slumber!" cried he. And the peasant and horses and the whole heavy load went to the bottom. The rills shivered, so that they, as floating ice, long followed

the Stream, and did not thaw until the grass became green and the flowers bloomed on the banks.

"My son! my son! Never shall I see my son again," lamented the stream's mother, the little spring in the woods. She wept so bitterly, and her tears resembled large, clear pearls, which rolled the same way the Stream had gone before.

"Hasten after him!" said the fount to the tears. "Greet him, and tell him to turn back before he reaches the sea, from which no return is then possible."

The Stream already saw the sea a little distance before him. He found himself in a woody region, where alders and pine roots and enormous masses of stone impeded his progress. Then he summoned his last strength.

"Out of the way! Out of the way!" sounded his commanding voice. And he forced himself through with great effort, but by so doing he was split up into a multitude of branches, and could not become whole again until he flowed into the sea.

But the fount's tears, the clear pearls, were petrified with grief at having come too late. They strewed themselves on the sandy bottom of the delta of the Stream in the form of real pearls, and as such they lie there still, as many as are left.

The cockles put their shells around them, in order to hide the fount's tears from the world, for such a delinquent son, as the Stream, is not worthy a mother's regret, thought the cockles. Still the wanderer often looks for these pearls and finds them. Many of them are pure, like the heart from which they once flowed.

ON THE ROAD OF LIFE.

THERE was once, many years ago, a rich and aristocratic lady, who lived in the country in a large house, grand and magnificent, like a regular castle. From one of the wings there was a high turret, from which one could have a wide view over the whole country, see how the large, broad high-road, beyond the long avenue which led up to the building, wound up the hills and through the woods, and how the little stream in many bends found its way to the sea, of which there was a free and open prospect from another side of the turret. One saw vessels with many sails, steamboats with the thick black smoke in a long trail after them, just like a great heavy cloud, and the little fishing-smacks which bobbed about in their wake. Besides there were fields and meadows where cattle grazed or lay and rested themselves in the soft grass.

A large park belonged to the castle, with grottoes,

temples and rustic seats, and a large green-house full of thousands of beautiful flowers and grape-vines, which climbed over the whole ceiling, and from which hung heavy clusters.

The whole section around, far more extended than the eye could reach, was included in the large domain.

But the dearest thing to the owner was a little boy, her only child. For him she would willingly have sacrificed all else.

No one in the house was allowed to oppose him. His slightest desire should be gratified, were it ever so unreasonable, for the weak mother said that never a tear should dim the eyes of her beloved little Henrik, and he only needed to say: "Mamma, if I do not get this or that, I will cry," to gain her consent to everything.

It is true he was not bad by nature, but he would unavoidably become wilful and domineering with such a bringing-up. He already began to make his power felt right often, and the servants among themselves called him "the little tyrant."

The rich lady had been a widow for a year back.

In the gate-cottage, at the end of the long avenue, lived a poor woman. She had a little daughter. For her she toiled with untiring zeal. She worked by the

day up at the mansion; between times she spun and wove, and when she saw little Elin skip and play around her, saw joy beam from the clear dark-blue eyes, her own heart beat with maternal bliss, and she felt the desire and strength to work with redoubled ardor.

"You, little Elin, will become the comfort of my old age," she used to say, "and my support when I am no longer able to work."

And little Elin smiled at her mother, without being fully able to comprehend the meaning of her words.

But she was good and obedient, and when her mother gave her a sad or reproachful glance, large clear tears always rose to Elin's eyes, and she could not feel calm or satisfied until she again saw her mother smile at her.

But many times there was scarcity of bread in the little cottage. One day little Elin sat outside the door, playing in the sand. She had built herself a little house out of stones and bits of bark, at least it was a house for the cow,—a large pine cone,—which, just now, with the greatest caution, was led into its new abode. It had to go slowly, else both roof and walls might tumble in.

Elin talked for both herself and the cow:

"There, Boss, now you have it all right, or how is it?"

"Moo," answered she for the cow.

"Do you see that I have laid in hay for you?"

"Moo, moo."

"Much obliged, you mean? Nothing to thank me for, Boss."

Thus she sat there quite a while and played by herself; and little Henrik, up there at the house, among all his fine playthings, which he threw away one after the other for newer and more amusing ones, was no happier in mind than Elin with her bits of bark and pine cones.

Mother Karin, as Elin's mother was called, sat in the cottage at the loom, with the door half open behind her. The noise of a wagon was heard from the high-road.

It was sunset. Elin turned round and saw a high, strange-looking equipage approaching at a slow pace.

Like all other little children, she was a trifle curious. The cow was permitted to stand there in peace and nibble its hay. Elin had to take a nearer look at the cart.

With both hands clasped around the latch of the large gate, which she prudently placed just a little ajar, she peeped down the road.

What a singularly equipped wagon it was!

Long poles were there bound fast every which way,

and through the stakes in the body of the wagon, one saw thick coils of rope, lying there like gigantic serpents. Many-colored mats, boxes both large and small, bundles and bags, all pell-mell, formed a load of an astonishing height. On top of all the rest was secured a large drum, and on this sat a little boy, who made zealous efforts with the lash of a tiny whip he held in his hand to reach the horse's bony back.

At the side of the wagon walked a man, holding the reins, to which he every now and then with a stimulating "g'lang" to the horse, gave a jerk. He was a large coarse man, with a black wavy beard and great black eyes. Elin fancied that he looked really frightful.

At the other side went a woman, but she was concealed by the wagon. Elin could not get a good sight of her.

Suddenly the man's eyes fell on Elin. She shuddered at the glance, but stood as if riveted to the gate.

The man uttered a few words, and seemed to call the woman to him. She took a few steps back and soon stood at his side.

Little Elin could now see her plainly She was a good-looking woman. She had both flowers and feathers in her hat, and from her ears hung large

gold ear-rings with glittering green stones. The lady of the mansion herself had no more beautiful ornaments.

"Do you see, Molly," said the man—but Elin could scarcely understand what he said, for he spoke with a singular foreign accent—"do you see how much that young one is like the child who died in the spring?"

"The Stockholm girl?" asked the woman.

"No, not that one. I mean little Lily."

"Yes, you are right," answered the good-looking Molly. "Shall I try?" continued she, with an inquiring and significant glance at the man.

"Yes, certainly—we would be fools if we didn't."

"But—they can see us from the cottage there," said Molly, hesitating.

"Nonsense, the large tree stands between. Quick—to work!"

The man slackened the horse's pace still more.

Molly advanced a step towards Elin. She took a large beautiful apple from her pocket and reached it out, saying: "See here, my nice little girl, would you like to have this apple?"

Elin let one hand glide slowly down from the latch and extended it hesitatingly. The large red apple pleased her eye.

"Come nearer, my little girl," said the woman. "What is your name?"

"Elin," answered she, and let go of the latch with the other hand also. But still she lingered.

"Elin! that is a pretty little name," said Molly artfully and caressingly.

Little Elin now ventured to take a step forward. The woman reached out the beautiful, tempting apple still farther towards her. Then Elin turned her head to one side. Her eyes met the large, black ones of the man. They flashed at her so sinister and fierce. She shrank back in affright, and, driven by a terrible disquietude, she hastened in to her mother, taking a single leap over the flower-bed in the garden.

The man gave vent to a coarse oath.

"Abominable, that she should escape us!" he burst out. "Did you see, Molly, the bound she gave over the bed? So light and agile! What promising talents! We must make some further attempt to get at her. We will take lodgings for the night in the village yonder. If we let little Dick there perform his tricks outside the house, we can easily remain in the neighborhood a day or two, and in the mean time some opportunity may offer. Besides it may be a good thing for the boy to exercise himself. He will otherwise grow stiff in the joints before we get to the city."

In what manner this pretty pair made their way through the world, we need not further explain.

With a violent slam little Elin closed the door behind her and rushed with a frightened aspect to her mother.

"Mother! dear darling mother!" cried she, impetuously, as she breathed quick and pressed her little head tight to her mother's arm; "I got so scared! so scared! She wanted to give me an apple, a big red apple. But the man with the black eyes frightened me. He is ugly, very ugly—I would not take the apple."

But from Elin's incoherent words Mother Karin could not get any clear idea of the circumstance.

That there had been something outside the cottage which occasioned little Elin's alarm, she could however understand, and she hurried out herself to see if she could discover the cause.

But no one was to be seen, not even a cat.

Little Elin was soon calmed again. She had her bowl of milk and a piece of bread, and in a little while slept quite sweetly at her mother's side.

The next morning Mother Karin again sat at her loom.

The large gate was heard to turn on its hinges, and little Elin, who stood by the window, peeped out.

"Mother, oh mother! Here he comes, see!"

Mother Karin threw a glance out of the window and then saw the terrible man Elin had before tried to describe. He carried a mat and a long staff, and was followed by the good-looking Molly, who in one hand held a tambourine and by the other led little Dick.

Dick was now clad in quite a different costume. He had a little short skirt of dark red velvet, with gold fringe on the edge. It is true the velvet was somewhat worn and the gold fringe was tarnished, but still it seemed very fine to little Elin. He had long brown curls, and only a little gold band around his brow.

Gladly would little Elin have followed them up the avenue to the large building, where they now directed their steps; but the memory of the dreadful look from the man's black eyes kept her in the cottage.

Yet she could surely venture to go just a little way!

She tripped cautiously out. She climbed up on the bench, which stood at the side of the avenue. There beyond on the large lawn she saw them quite plainly. The dark man held the staff high up; little Dick mounted it, nimble as a squirrel. The staff swung

violently back and forth, but Dick held fast bravely. Whew! there he turned a somerset high up in the air, and in a flash he stood erect on the ground again.

It was amusing to see, and little Henrik stood up at one of the windows and clapped his hands with delight.

Elin would have liked to stay, in the expectation of seeing more, but the jugglers now seemed about to march off again, and her fear of the "fire-eyes" impelled her to go in.

The "fire-eyes" however had already discovered her.

"Did you see the little girl, Molly?" said the man. "But she seemed to be afraid of me. No use, then, to waste time waiting for a chance to *entice* her to us. It only remains to employ our last means to get possession of her. Her mother is perhaps as sensible as many others, and may be willing to make a reasonable agreement. It would be a pity if we lost the smart young one. You go in, Molly, and offer her something handsome for the girl; tell her that she shall see her once every year, and that she can be convinced that we will not whip the little creature to death."

Molly went in.

It would take too much space to mention how skilfully Molly tried, with all possible representations

and the promise of a large sum of money, to persuade Mother Karin to give up little Elin. All was of course in vain.

In order to thoroughly assure herself of her departure, Mother Karin followed the strange woman way out, far beyond the gate. The man there awaited her.

"I see," said he, "you do not bring the girl with you. Let it go. You can however consider the matter till this afternoon, Mother Karin,—wasn't that what you called her? Before that time you may come to a wiser view of the subject, and I will then call for your final decision, that is to say, take the girl."

And with this they again disappeared.

The afternoon came. The rich lady as usual took a promenade in the park, accompanied by her little adored Henrik. She looked at him with delight, as he joyously skipped about her. Now he was at one, now at the other side of the road. There stood a beautiful blue-bell. He plucked it. One lovely flower after the other tempted him, and he had soon gathered a whole little bouquet in his hand.

"Do you like flowers, my darling?" asked the mother.

"Yes, certainly. I wish to have them in the large

vase in the middle of the table up there in the saloon."

"Yes, little Henrik, we will put them there and throw water on them, so that they will keep fresh a long time," said the mother.

"Ah yes, they shall have water, but now, right away. Mamma, go home for the vase now, with water in it all ready; but no, you needn't do that either. It would take entirely too long. You can go in to Karin in the cottage there, and get a glass of water for me."

"Ah no, dear little Henrik, the flowers will not wither in so short a time," objected his mother.

"Yes, they will; see, the yellow flower hangs its head already. Go now, immediately, mamma, *else I will cry*. While you are gone, I will pick the flowers which stand over there."

And the mother, who had never yet been able to deny her darling anything, complied willingly with his desire and went into the cottage. Henrik looked around. Down there at the large gate stood a high lilac flower. He must have that, too. He hurried to it. But what did he see? A little way down the road was "the man with the staff," the woman who played on the drum with the bells, and uppermost of all on a large load sat the little boy who had amused

him so much that morning. Like a flash he was there.

"Come down, little boy and do some new pretty tricks for me," said he. "My mamma is there in the cottage; when she comes out, she will give you some money."

The man was suddenly seized with a new idea.

"Molly," whispered he, "this high-born child might do just as well, seems to me."

She nodded approvingly and took the reins from he man's hand. The latter got the mat down from the wagon and went a little farther along the road with it. Henrik followed, fully convinced that the mat would be spread out, and new tricks begun, as he desired. But all at once the mat was thrown around himself. His mouth was stopped; not a single sound could he send forth. The dark man jumped up on the cart with him. Good-looking Molly sat there already. The horse received a smart cut of the whip and started off at the top of his speed.

There in the cottage sat Mother Karin again at her loom; but the work went more slowly than usual, and she was tormented by a certain anxiety, in the expectation of the dark man's visit.

The door opened and she started. But when she

turned and saw, that instead of the dreadful dark man, it was the "madam herself," her countenance cleared.

The rich lady, however, had noticed her uneasiness and inquired the cause of it. Mother Karin explained it all, feeling a relief in her trouble, through having some one to confide it to. The lady listened to her with patience, but said nothing further. She merely requested the glass of water, which she in her simplicity had gone to get for Henrik, and with this in her hand she went out again.

But—where had Henrik, her darling little Henrik, turned his steps? Had he not waited for his mother's return? Or had he gone home alone with his flowers? She hastened back. No, he was not there either. They called him and searched everywhere. He often had the habit of sitting silent, concealed in a corner, while they looked for him anxiously. It amused the little wilful boy, to set the whole house in a commotion. Henrik was nowhere to be found! Night came and the mother's despair was boundless.

Not until the next day did it come to Mother Karin's knowledge that little Henrik was missing. Then a thought rose within her. The dark man had not appeared, in spite of his threat. He had probably been on his way to her cottage, but had

then met little Henrik and taken him instead. Such was the true state of the case; it seemed to her clear as the day. She directed her course up to the rich lady, communicated her supposition, and the likelihood of it was too great, not to be accepted. Swift messengers were sent out in all directions—they had no telegraph, alas, in those days—but all, all in vain; the dark man could not be discovered.

Deeply did the unhappy mother mourn the loss of her son. But her mind was embittered besides. She became merciless in her judgment and hard towards her dependants. The resentment and bitterness within her was always strongest when little Elin came into her presence. She considered her the original cause of the great misfortune. Finally the near neighborhood of Mother Karin and her little daughter became absolutely hateful to her. They must go away.

One day, without Mother Karin's having any idea that the unfriendly looks with which the rich lady regarded her could forebode so terrible an event, she was surprised by a sudden order to leave the place. The gate-cottage was already destined as a residence for another person.

With little Elin by the hand Mother Karin, weeping, left the dear cottage. Her lot became more and more

grievous. Work was not always to be had, for she could not everywhere get permission to take little Elin with her. Finally she fell sick, and lay long in a little cabin in a remote village, where kind-hearted people in the meantime took care of her and the poor little Elin. Two years had thus elapsed.

We will now see what had become of little Henrik since we last saw him, wrapped in the horrible dark man's old mat, from which he was freed, however, after a few minutes, but with an effective threat to be strangled at once, if he made a single attempt to scream.

They did not stop until after a whole hour's incessant driving. Henrik was so dumb-founded that it had not yet entered his mind to cry. And he was sly enough to perceive that he did not have his usual resource in feigning tears.

Little Dick had moved nearer to him, and with a slight nudge, given him this well-meant advice in a whisper:

"Be obedient, and don't yell, else you will get no food."

A consultation was now held between the man and the good-looking Molly, in which it was decided, that for fear of pursuit, they should leave the country as

soon as possible. And this decision was carried out. They went over to Germany.

It would be tiresome to follow our little friend step by step in his sorrowful career for a whole year's time. He often had to feel right forcible strokes of a stick over his back, when he did not comply quickly and willingly enough with every demand, or when he was not sufficiently expert in turning somersets, or throwing his leg up to his neck, biting himself in the heel, &c., and more than once went hungry to sleep in the corner by the side of little Dick, in whom, however, he always had a faithful ally and a brave playmate in occasional leisure moments, when they were left to themselves.

But Henrik had made up a plan in his little head, and now was the time to put it into execution. He would run away. With Dick's assistance it would surely go through. A year had passed and Henrik's tormentors now believed it safe for them to return to Sweden. They had engaged passage on a vessel, and the children were already taken on board. The man and Molly were still at their lodgings in the town. Not until late in the evening did they come down, and the vessel was to sail early the next morning. They retired to rest in perfect security. Then Henrik crept forth softly and stole up on deck; light as a lit-

tle monkey he ran over the plank, and then flew like an arrow down the street.

When the dark man in the morning inquired for Henrik, little Dick answered indifferently: "I suppose he is still asleep over there in the corner;" and Henrik was not missed until it was too late—and the vessel already far, far out on the sea.

Henrik ran until he could scarcely breathe more. Finally he was obliged to check his course, all tired out. The dark man he had fortunately escaped; but he stood there alone, late in the evening—alone in a foreign land. And he now wept bitter tears in good earnest.

An elderly gentleman was seen coming with steady steps along the street. His glance happened to fall on Henrik, and the little boy's deep distress seemed to awaken his compassion.

"Why do you cry, my little friend?" asked he.

It was hard for Henrik to give any coherent and intelligible answer; but after a number of questions the kind-hearted man at last succeeded in finding ut pretty nearly the true state of the case, and from the broken German, which Henrik during the year had learned to speak, he drew the conclusion that he was from Sweden, in which supposition he was

strengthened by what the boy said about the voyage across the sea.

But "what mamma was called—where mamma lived!" these were things concerning which little Henrik could not give the slightest information.

A lucky star, however, had beamed upon the boy's path, when he was brought in the old man's way.

"What a strange providence," murmured the old man to himself. "Death snatched away my only beloved son, my own Henrik, scarcely eight days ago, and here now stands before me a new little Henrik, whose sad situation appeals to me in a powerful voice for fatherly protection."

"Child," said he, "I will be your father, and will give you a new mother in place of the one you cannot find."

And he took little Henrik by the hand, brought him to his home and delivered him, with some hearty words, into the charge of his gentle and loving wife. And in the care of the adopted son the noble pair found a recompense for the loss they had sustained.

Henrik, through the severe discipline he had undergone, under the hard hands of the dark man and Molly, had become quite changed. With obedience and diligence he repaid the good foster parents for their kindness.

In the meantime the rich lady, Henrik's real mother, had no longer any joy. Every object which she fastened her gaze upon, reminded her of the lost one. Finally she resolved to travel, travel far away in foreign lands. And she took a long journey, saw new places, new cities continually, but the old regret remained bitter as ever.

After two years she decided to return. Travel could not alleviate the grief she felt; it was now increased instead by another feeling, strange to her hitherto: she felt remorse. She reproached herself bitterly for her former hardness towards Mother Karin, and felt a gnawing anxiety over the sorrowful lot to which the poor woman had probably been subjected, through her mistress' heartlessness.

The resolution now awakened within her to look up the innocent sufferer on her return home, and if possible make amends for her fault. With this aim before her eyes, the sorrow for her own loss no longer seemed so heavy to the rich lady. Her search was long in vain. At length it happened one day, that she, on coming out of church, noticed a poor blind woman, who beseechingly stretched out her hand. A little girl stood by her side. The rich lady regarded them more closely and recognised—Mother Karin and little Elin. Such had now become her lot. Over

exertion and tears had dimmed Mother Karin's eyes, and at last no conceivable means remained to her of providing for herself and her child. She was obliged to beg. Eagerly did the rich lady embrace the opportunity of atoning for what she had done. Mother Karin and Elin should live with her. The former was treated with the utmost kindness, and in the care of little Elin's education the rich lady found her own happiness. A year thus elapsed. Elin grew up and became a good and sensible girl, justifying the hopes her benefactress fastened upon her.

Life at the great mansion had gone on a long time without any interruption, until one day Mother Karin's gradually waning lamp of life quietly died out; and Elin dropped many tears of heartfelt regret. A little while afterwards the rich lady fell ill. They sent to the nearest town for a physician, and the latter shook his head doubtfully. Many years of soul suffering, said he, had undermined the body's strength. Only by a miracle could it be restored. Several weeks elapsed and the rich lady's condition was unchanged. The gentle Elin sat constantly at her side.

"Ah, my good friend," said Elin, "how happy I

would feel if I could guess any desire of yours, and it stood in my power to fulfil it."

"I have scarcely any desire left for this world. Yes, one: repeat to me once more your mother's last words, before she opened her eyes to a better light."

And from Elin's trembling lips fell the words:

"Elin," so said my mother, "my beloved child, never cease to call down the Lord's blessing upon your benefactress, and pray with me, that He in His grace, may grant her to see and be able to embrace her son again, with as true maternal joy, as I now clasp you to my breast."

The door of the bed-chamber was now opened quite carefully, and the respected physician entered. He was accompanied by a young man, who with wondering and dreamy looks regarded every object in the room.

"Here, madam," said the physician, "I bring with me a young colleague, Doctor Henrici, who in consequence of the extensive studies he has made in other lands, can perhaps give some advice, where my own insight, I acknowledge it, is insufficient."

The sick woman fastened a dull glance on the stranger. But suddenly it was enlivened by a wonderful light; a beam of joy passed over her face. She sat up, and stretching out both arms to him, she exclaimed:

"Henrik! my son! my Henrik! A voice in my heart and your great likeness to your father tell me that it is you."

And it was indeed Henrik. After his foster-parents' death, as he had finished his studies, he resolved to return to his true fatherland. He related briefly his experiences, which we already know in part; further, how he had been educated by the good man, as if he been his own child; the latter's death, and the dear foster-mother's decease, which soon followed; his determination to settle down in London with his practice, and his faint hope of being able to find his mother once more through some lucky chance. This chance had now occurred, long before he had dared to think of it. He then related how his first patient here in the land had been a man, who, drunken and miserable, was found in a tavern of ill repute, and how in this human wreck he recognised "the black man," who notwithstanding, before he drew his last sigh, requested and obtained his forgiveness. The good-looking Molly herself stood as landlady at the bar. He had inquired after Dick and learned that the latter had followed his own example and taken to flight.

"And Dick was a smart boy. He would certainly

get along in the world, there was no danger about that," the good-looking Molly had added.

But about the name of the region or the place from whence they had carried off little Henrik, good-looking Molly had not been able, or was not willing to give any information. However, they now sat there, happily reunited, mother and son. And the joy of reunion had a beneficial effect upon the sick woman. She recovered and her strength increased day by day. Leaning on her beloved son's arm she could soon take an occasional turn in the park. Elin was constantly with them.

With pleasure Henrik's mother observed how much he seemed to enjoy Elin's society and the interest with which the young girl listened to his accounts of his many travels, the customs of the different countries he had visited, &c. And when finally Henrik and Elin begged for her motherly blessing, she granted it with deep emotion, as she added:

"Your fates have before stood in such near connection with each other, may you now in peace and joy continue your wanderings side by side on the road of life.

BERTHA AND HER DOG.

IT was a happy day for Bertha, for "Lady" had some pups, and the little girl, who was a great friend of animals, sat faithfully by the kennel and looked at the little puppies, which crept around the mother, for they were not able to run yet. But her parents, who thought it unnecessary to keep so many dogs, as they had a pair of setters besides "Lady," had ordered that all the puppies should be drowned. Bertha begged and prayed that they would at least keep one, which she alone might take care of; and as the dog mother knew what a warm and zealous intercessor she had in the sweet child, who held the little clumsy black puppy in her arms, she hopped up, licked Bertha's face and gave her such a beseeching look, that it was impossible to misunderstand it.

"Dear, darling, beloved papa!" entreated Bertha with tears in her deep blue eyes: "see how poor

Lady begs! Leave her only this one puppy, which I will take care of and love, and I promise to be so good and obedient, that you will never need to be displeased with me."

Little Carl began to cry, too, and implore in his childish language: "Carl good, papa never get angry with Carl, dear papa!" added he caressingly.

Finally the father yielded, and Bertha was allowed to keep the puppy, a little coal-black, pretty creature, with long ears, a thick nose, clumsy paws, and which she called "Duke," after grandfather's white poodle, which she thought so much of. Bertha and also little Carl were now seen daily by the kennel, where Duke resided as long as he was little, and it was Bertha who first taught him to eat, by dipping the whole black round nose in the saucer of milk, so that the puppy snuffed and sneezed, and had to lick his chaps to get rid of the milk that stuck to them. And in that way he learned to eat properly.

When he became larger, he frolicked and romped all day long with the children, but also played them many pranks, for he bit and hid their hats, their shoes and mittens, and seemed to have an especial desire for Bertha's fur-hood, and for mamma's fur-boots, according to the habit of puppies. Notwithstanding all this, Duke became a great favorite with everybody

in the house, for he was peaceable and friendly, and had only one enemy—a large gray cat that hissed and spit every time the roguish dog came near her, so that Duke finally found himself called upon to bark at Pussy whenever they met, and it was utterly impossible for Bertha to reconcile the dog and cat, therefore she let them squabble as much as they chose.

Duke loved and followed his young mistress everywhere. When winter came, he lay there before the fire, and often Bertha lay down to sleep with the dog's warm soft body for a cushion.

Little Carl also thought a great deal of Duke, but in his childish way he many times dragged him by the tail and pulled his ears, so that the poor creature was at last obliged to make known his displeasure through a low growl.

But the nicest thing of all was when the children were out in the yard with their sleds; then Duke ran barking after them, and when Bertha playfully threw herself in the soft snow-bank, Duke hurried there and they both frolicked and tumbled about in the wildest glee, until finally, when they stood up again, they looked like regular snow-men, so much snow remained in Bertha's light hair and Duke's shaggy coat. But in the beginning he was not used to the snow, and Bertha often laughed when she remembered how Duke,

the first time he saw a snow-flake, looked up and down in surprise and at last began to bark at the uninvited guests, as he did the first moon-light night, when he sat by Bertha on the stoop, while she was eating her bread and butter.

But the winter passed, and Duke grew larger and larger, as well as increased in wisdom and sagacity every day. He was Bertha's pet and the companion of all her walks, and little Carl's great delight.

Now came the spring with its warm sun, which thawed all the ice, leafed all the trees and opened the anemones' pretty eyes. Duke tumbled about in the young grass with his little mistress, and they were both as merry and sportive as the spring itself. The summer came with its ripe berries, and white water-lilies bloomed in the little pond just outside the garden, where the children had been forbidden to go, and which prohibition the obedient Bertha had always remembered so well that she had not once approached the dangerous spot alone. Carl, on the other hand, who was smaller and more foolish, also had a poorer memory than his sister, and the white pond-lilies tempted him irresistibly to the water's edge.

It was a glorious summer afternoon. Their father had gone out in the fields to rejoice at the waving

grain, which promised such a good harvest, and had taken Bertha with him; she of course was followed by Duke, faithful as ever. Little Carl, who was playing in the garden under the oversight of his nurse, who had left him, however, for a moment, now availed himself of the opportunity and stole away, and when he saw Bertha walking down the path with their father, he started to catch up with them, but stopped at the pond, which was not far from there—quite charmed by the lilies, which beckoned to him among the green leaves. The child stretched forward to reach one of the flowers, but lost his balance and fell, with a scream, headlong into the water.

The scream was not heard by any one but Duke, who, guided by his instinct, and to Bertha's astonishment, set off at full speed over the ditches and stones to the pond; barking frantically, he ran around it to get at the child, and then plunged into the water himself, where he seized the boy's little jacket, as if to hold him up in this way until help could come.

The father and Bertha heard the barking from the direction where the pond lay, and divined the accident. They ran there, and now saw the faithful dog, who swam in the pond, holding the child's clothes in his mouth to keep him from sinking.

Both gave a cry of terror, and the father hastened

to unfasten a boat, in which he soon took up both Duke and Carl, whom the sagacious animal had saved from death. The little one was senseless, but was soon restored to consciousness; and Duke shook the water from his hair, and with a thousand demonstrations of joy bounded around his young mistress, who clasped him in her arms and overwhelmed him with caresses, in her gratitude to him for saving her little brother from certain death.

This was the way the faithful Duke recompensed Bertha's petition for his own life, when he was yet a little pup; and how often Bertha thought and said, as she caressed her dear dog: "If it hadn't been for you, I would no longer have had little Carl! You have saved my little brother's life, you good, faithful Duke, and therefore I will love you as long as I live."

OUR DOCTOR.

IN the midst of the village stood the church, old and gray; that one could see by the high, old-fashioned roof, the windows with the small panes and the strange forms on the door; but it was built of granite, and could therefore last for many years yet. High up on the roof was a turret that ended in a beautiful cross of brass—or gold, I know not which—but when the sun illumined it, it shone like the purest gold. Around the old church spread the grave-yard with its luxuriant trees, and the many, many tomb-stones, simple wooden crosses and well-cut slabs with gilt letters; in death there is no distinction, there slumber beside each other the beggar and the nobleman, old and young, friends and enemies. Many of the stones were overgrown with moss, and the handsome characters were effaced; many crosses had fallen down, and were as gray and mouldy as the old church. There were

some small grave-mounds, however, whose fresh verdure and fragrant flowers gave evidence of care and attention; loving hands had planted the flowers and watered them in memory of the dead. Under an aged oak in one corner of the church-yard was such a well-cared-for, grassy mound, and in the midst of the roses and tulips rose a roughly cut stone, on one side of which was a verse, not in gilt letters it is true, but yet nicely and evenly carved, and on the other side stood the two words:

"Our Doctor."

That is an unusual inscription, is it not? A group of children are playing over there; ask the smallest of them, and she will answer with a serious look and clasped hands: "That is our doctor, he who lived in the white house over there, he who told stories and could make mamma, grandmother and great-grandmother well; but he no longer lies in the grave, he is with God."

Some of the older children may perhaps be able to give a better account, and I will now relate to you what I heard from the children and their parents about the good and skilful doctor. There are not many in the village who know when he moved to the white house; and the oldest people in the village tell

you that they cannot remember anything but that they had always, when they went by there, seen the doctor's friendly face at the window, bending over immense dusty books with yellow leaves, his old housekeeper in the kitchen, his equally old dog before the front-door, and his little siskin* sitting on the myrtle tree. It must be realized that the grandfathers and grandmothers and the great-grandfathers and great-grandmothers remember the time when the doctor did not yet wear a peruke, but his own brown locks; when Nora, the housekeeper, did not have such wrinkled cheeks, and on Sundays wore a bright red handkerchief with yellow roses; when Ponto's mamma was a little yelping puppy, and the myrtle tree a little shoot; but that was long, long ago, and it was already forgotten, except sometimes when grandfather happened to come across an old prescription, yellow with age, in the bottom of his chest, or when grandmother was going to put the garret in order, and among old-fashioned caps, moth-eaten garters with large buckles and other antiquated things, found a box of paper dolls, which she once received from the doctor, when she, as a little girl, dutifully swallowed the cough-drops which he had prescribed.

* A species of finch.

But the building was just as it had always been, especially as the walls were freshly whitewashed every summer. The flowers in the little garden always smelt as sweet, the yard was always as nicely kept, and the mountain-ash rustled beside the birches and cast down its white blossoms upon the passers-by. It seemed to the children and the young people that it had never been otherwise. Every morning the door of the white house opened and the doctor stepped out, clad in a long snuff-colored coat with large pockets, a gray felt hat, a large cane with a brass head (which Nora had to polish every Saturday), and a yellow silk handkerchief that hung far out of his back pocket.

First he stood still, as if to consider whether he ought to choose the right side or the left, yet finally always steered his course into the village, past the church, the inn, the court-house and the little country-store, then turned up and sat a while in the church-yard, just under the large oak in the corner, and then went home again, to his books and flowers. No weather could hinder him from this walk, and the people in the village fancied that the rain or storm slackened at that hour. All the children knew full well what time in the morning this was, and therefore in every door, in every window, were seen little heads.

nodding to him, and the doctor nodded back untiringly. But if there were any persons in the church-yard, when the doctor seated himself under the old oak, they took good care not to disturb him—it was thought that the doctor then said his morning prayers.

In the forenoon one did not see him out, unless there was somebody sick; not until afternoon did he take his second promenade, and it afforded the children great benefit and pleasure. Then the old man again sat under the oak, but this time surrounded by boys and girls of all ages, from the tiniest, who sat on his knee or crept under the bench, to those who were quite advanced in their studies. If one had made the children relate what they did under the oak, they would probably not have been able to give a definite answer; it was mostly play and stories and singing, and yet the mothers could not tell how the little ones learned to read and count, and how they knew the prettiest songs about "The Spring," "The Dove on the Lily branch," "The Magpie and the Fox," and many others; and they must have had a delightful time there, for better than any punishment worked the words: "If you are naughty, you cannot go to the doctor this afternoon.'

In winter, when the cold and snow prevented the doctor from sitting out long (although the boys of

the village shovelled the path that led to the oak every day), and the children could not be there either, the doctor collected the young ones in the large hall next to the church, and there they sat by the long table, making strange-looking marks and lines, which in time would become round and handsome letters. The doctor went himself from table to table, pointing with his long cane and saying with his gruff voice: "A little rounder, Anders; a little straighter, Greta; a little finer, Stina; a little more slanting, Petter;" and then the children hastened directly to do as the doctor said, they were so anxious to please him, although they did not need to fear either the rod or the corner, for the old doctor was so kind-hearted and taught with so much mildness and patience. If any one began to be stubborn or disobedient, the doctor took the culprit by the arm, sighed, and pushed him gently out through the door: "There, dear child, now go your way, as you will not be dutiful," said the doctor mildly, and then he looked so sorrowful, as though he himself had been the one who was sent out. On such occasions a deep silence prevailed in the hall, and every childish heart took the firm resolution not to be deserving of such a punishment.

The dear doctor must have had a good heart and a particularly good way with children; for if he ever

saw a little creature crying, no matter when or where it was, he never could go by without asking the cause of its tears and speaking some words of comfort.

One day he had come from a patient and was walking, in earnest meditation, down the village street towards his house; then he saw a little boy, sitting outside an humble dwelling and crying bitterly. The doctor stopped directly, seated himself beside the little one and inquired why he wept.

"If mamma should get sick,"—sobbed the boy.

"If your mamma is sick, I will go in and see how she is—come!"

"No, she isn't sick now, but if she should get so!"

"Get so? What put that idea in your head?"

"Why, because the miller's wife got sick after she had been rinsing clothes at the river."

"But, dear boy, one need not always get sick after rinsing clothes, or how is it?" asked the doctor.

"No—but if—and who will then cook our food? I can't do it."

"But, little Toddlekins, you do just like the girl in the story."

"What girl, what did she do?" asked the boy, quickly wiping away his tears with the sleeve of his jacket.

"Haven't you heard about the girl who cried because the cat looked at her?"

"No. Oh, tell me about it! Tell me!"

"Well, but it is an old story. I have surely told it already to your mamma, when she was little."

"Yes, but I don't remember it. Good doctor, do tell me!"

"All right, but there is still a tear on your cheek; first wipe it off—that's it—well then, there was once a little girl, as small as you, and she was crying very hard, just as you did a few minutes ago. Then her mamma asked her why she cried—"

"Just as you did, doctor."

"Yes, and then the girl sobbed: "Because—because—the—the cat—loo—looks at me."

"Well, but, my dear child, we haven't any cat," said her mamma.

"Yes, but whe—when we get—"

Toddlekins burst out in a hearty laugh: "She couldn't be so silly as that!'

"Yes, my boy, and you are like her. Another time do not weep for such trifles; and if your mamma gets sick, then we will try to find something from the bottles in my large cupboard, and Nora can cook your meals; good-bye to you, Toddlekins!'

And how was the doctor at home? "Why, he goes

fussing about from five o'clock in the morning," relates Nora, "gives hemp-seed and water to the bird, opens the windows and seats himself before his old musty books, writes and reads all day, and while I am brushing up, he is out. In the evening he waters his plants, and clips and trims them, and at nine o'clock he goes himself and locks the door, and sees that the door-bell is in order, for somebody might get sick during the night. At ten he sleeps like a good child, unless there is some one very ill in the village, for in that case the kind-hearted doctor cannot get any rest; then he pores still more closely into his books, and stands a long time before his medicine-chest. A queer way would he keep house, that is certain; he always warns me and says: 'Nora,' says he, 'you should not prepare fine dinners,' says he, 'for you see, it only costs money and hurts the stomach,' says he; and one would think that he was a regular miser, but only let half a dozen poor wretches come along, then he does not spare dinner and breakfast and perhaps supper besides, and how does his coat look? Threadbare and moth-eaten, and when I say: 'Highly respected Herr doctor, can you not buy yourself a new coat?' says I, then says he: 'Nora,' says he, 'this is good enough for an old man,' says he; 'one ought not to throw away money on fine clothes,' says he. But the first

raggamuffin that shows himself in the yard, gets clothed from top to toe, and it is no sham either, but whole and good clothes all through; that is the way our doctor manages, good people."

This was Nora's account, and even if she was sometimes a little out of humor, she did not have the heart to leave her old master; "for," said she, "no one knows as well as I, how the gruel ought to be and how much pepper he wants on his meat, and no one can as well as I mend his shirts and sew on the buttons just where *he* wishes to have them. No, it is best as it is."

But if the doctor was good and kind elsewhere, he was "a regular God's angel" at the sick-bed, related the people. He could then walk so noiselessly over the floor, then his rough voice became so soft, so tender, his small gray eyes so mild and his hand so light, so careful. "There is no need of being sick when *our* doctor is the doctor," said the people; and when the old friend lay in the grave and the new doctor visited the sick, the people sighed and said: "Ah! it was very different with *our* doctor!" and when the new doctor prescribed wet bandages and baths, they shook their heads and said: "Never did we hear of anything so silly! To be sure *our* doctor said, that water was a good thing, for with it everything became clean; but *he* never spoke of bandages

and baths. It is all over with the good old times and with the large medicine-chest."

It happened one day that the children waited in vain for the door of the white house to open. It was something so unusual, that the blacksmith's son Olle could not refrain from sticking his head in the kitchen to ask Nora the reason; and soon the report went like wildfire through the village, that the doctor, who had made so many well, was sick himself.

"Oh! he need only take down one of those many bottles in his closet," said Toddlekins, full of trust.

"And pour some out in a spoon," said another little fellow.

"And take a bite of sugar with it," said a little girl, who knew by experience that this belonged to the operation.

"Yes, he can do that, then he will certainly get well," said the other children, and so they hastened to their sports and lessons again. The seat under the oak they wiped clean from dew and dust, they cleared away the dry twigs from the grass and made the place look nice and trim, but the doctor did not come that day nor the next—he never came again. He sent a message to the children and left a little keep-sake for each, but he went away himself. The children only saw the black coffin, the minister, who

read from a large book, and Nora who walked after the coffin and cried her large white handkerchief completely wet; they heard the chorister sing a long psalm, which was not like their songs; and heard the sod fall on the coffin, and stood there with their fathers and mothers and all the people of the village in the church-yard.

All was over; they made a little mound over the grave and dispersed. Ponto, who had missed his master during this time, would not eat anything, and Nora in vain put nice milk, bones with plenty of meat on them and bread, before him, but it was no use. "He will probably die on his master's grave, as it usually goes," said she in despair. Whether this occurred or not, I do not know. The siskin flew away—it no longer thrived in the deserted room. Then the children gradually began to realize what they had lost, and asked, weeping: "Why couldn't the doctor make himself well, when he made so many others well; why couldn't he take down one of the bottles in the closet?"

"Dear children," said the old folks, "when God wills, then death comes, and against death no bottles avail."

"Could he then not read in his books?"

"No. There is no book that contains a cure for death."

"Then we cannot do anything but put a beautiful cross on his grave," said the children.

"A cross is soon destroyed," said their elders, "but a handsome stone—'

"Yes, yes, with gilt letters!"

"We cannot do that, but the stone-cutter Jonas can cut the letters—he learned how to write from the doctor."

But when the time came to carve the name—no one knew what it was. The pastor might perhaps have known it, as he had the church-book, but it was all the same, the whole village knew who "Our Doctor" was, and that was cut on the stone. Under the oak was his grave; there he had so liked to sit during his lifetime, and there they raised the stone. The flowers grew well, many hands tended them. The children played as before in the church-yard, and in the branches of the old rustling oak the birds gathered every evening and sang their glad songs; perhaps the little siskin was also there among them.

THE TOMTEN.*

BY the side of a beautiful little inland lake was a simple cottage, around whose base the waves constantly played. One afternoon, when the sun had just gone down to take a nap in the arms of the waves, little Greta sat on the door-sill of the cottage. With her hands she built real little houses, yes, even cities, in the sand. They looked so stately—and the little one was jubilant over her work. Just as she was thus enjoying herself so heartily, a little man with a red cap on his head came from, nobody knows where. He walked carefully between Greta's little palaces, and nodded a friendly good-evening to her.

"Good-evening, and God's peace!"—answered Greta back, without being the least bit afraid of the little man.

He did not mean her any harm either—that she

* A good spirit who protects the house.

could plainly see, as he took such good care not to touch her playthings.

"You are playing, my child," said he, and patted her on her light-haired head, while his red cap nodded to and fro.

"Yes, I am building houses like those they have in the big city. Ah! how nice it must be to live in one of them!"

"Hum, my child, you think it would be so pleasant? Are you not contented as you have it?"

"Oh yes, mother is so good, and father too. If I went away there to the city, then father and mother could go with me."

"Hum! Hum!" nodded the little man. "We will see; but I will tell you that your parents' cottage is also a stately house—for God, who holds children dear, dwells within."

"Yes, I know that," said Greta.

"Hum! take care that you know it always. Good-bye to you!"

"God's peace!"

And the little man disappeared just as he had come, without one being able to see where.

On the other side of the lake lay a right royal country-seat, with large turrets and costly pillars,

such as you have surely seen, at least in pictures. There resided a rich gentleman with his daughter, little Fröken* Aurora, if I remember right.

All around the mansion was a large park, with hundreds of trees and flowers in infinitude. In the middle of the park was a summer-house, which was so pretty, that you have surely never seen its match. There were also pillars and lattice-work; above the pillars under the roof, went a rich garland of flowers, carved in wood, so well and so carefully, that one could think it natural. All this was something worth seeing, you may believe. Up there, among the rich festoons, a pair of swallows had built their ingenious nest; you have certainly seen swallows' nests and admired their well-designed dwellings. But then you also know, that when one tears down such a nest, sorrow and unhappiness will follow him as long as he lives.

Along the path which led to the summer-house, little Fröken Aurora ran playing, attended by a servant. Aurora was a spoiled child; she had everything she wished—her mother could not refuse her little darling. Aurora happened to see the little swallows' nest up under the roof, just as one of the old swallows came flying with a worm in his bill to

* Miss.

give to Lis little ones, who piping, stuck out their naked heads from the cramped home.

"Fy! what an ugly gray lump!" exclaimed Aurora. "How could you let that nest stay there? It spoils the beautiful ornament completely. Give me a long cane,"—continued she in her domineering way.

The servant was obliged to obey, you can understand, and gave her a cane. She brought the stick up against the beautiful little nest—and crash it lay there on the ground, all broken and dismembered. The little swallows crept, peeping and trembling, on the cold damp ground, and the two old birds, who had come there, flew lamenting back and forth over their darlings.

The servant himself seemed to feel sorry for the poor creatures; but the naughty Fröken Aurora only laughed at it all, and looked with pleasure at the poor little things.

Just then a wonderful little figure was seen coming along the edge of the roof. He walked so easily, just as if it had been an ordinary floor. When he reached the place where the swallows' nest had been, he seated himself on the gutter and shook his red cap. Aurora saw him and exclaimed:

"Oh, what a little tomtegubbe, how comical he

looks!" and Aurora began to laugh and make fun of him.

"Why have you done these little creatures so much narm?" he asked her.

"*You!*" returned Aurora sharply. "Papa and mamma have said that I am Fröken, and that all shall call me so. As far as those creatures are concerned, they had no business up on our roof. They only soiled the beautiful carvings."

"Hum!" was the little man's answer, while he continued to nod with the red cap.

Aurora at this moment caught sight of a butterfly with shining wings. She began to run after it directly, to try to catch it and pull the wings off; she liked butterflies' wings very much, they had such beautiful colors.

"Hum! pride goes before a fall," muttered Red-cap, and disappeared, hastily and unobserved as usual.

About twelve years after that, we will, if you have the desire, take a little peep into the cottage over there by the lake, as you remember. It was again evening; like the former time the sun was just on the point of setting. Around the cottage was a little patch of ground, where the grain stood so high and rich, that even if you had walked as stiff as an old

corporal, you still could not have reached above it. The cottage was all newly painted—with red, of course—and the window-panes and shutters were white. It looked very cosy, you may believe.

In the house sat Greta, who was now a large person, and still prettier than before. She looked so cheerful and contented, that one could see plainly that the child-loving God still liked to reside in the simple home. She sat and rocked on her knee a little child, about like your youngest sister, and she looked at the little one as tenderly and lovingly as your mother looked at you when you were real little.

But only see there! the door opens and a young, brisk man comes in. He lays his cap on the lounge, approaches Greta, and kisses her heartily on the brow. This is Greta's husband, her dear Hakan. Gracious, just look! How did he get in, that little friendly figure, he, the tomtegubben with the red cap? He now stands there behind the young couple's chair and looks so contented, while his red cap wags back and forth, just as if he meant to say: "I like this, here I will stay."

"Hum!" murmured he between his teeth. "It is good for me to be here. In this palace I will reside. Here also shall the Tomten bestow many blessings."

And the little one in Greta's lap saw Red-cap

and smiled at him, as a child smiles. Greta and her husband did not see him, because they were not, like their child, born on a Sunday.

This was, as I said, in the humble cottage, but now I think, if you are of the same mind as I, that we will for a moment visit the country-seat across the lake. In the finest parlor, with the new furniture from Stockholm, sat Fröken Aurora on the soft sofa. She looked well, you may believe, in her beautiful dress of the richest silk. With a certain impatience she stamped her foot on the floor, as if she had been angry about something, but shortly afterwards she became glad and smiling again, for the door opened and her betrothed entered. Aurora was also engaged, as is perhaps the case with your eldest sister. They both looked at each other so tender and confidential.

"My Aurora, we shall have our wedding. We are happy. We have everything in abundance, so that nothing need be lacking."

"No, God be praised, we cannot become poor," she said, and pressed her lover's hand.

But just then under the table before the sofa, was seen our acquaintance, he with the red cap. He shook his head and looked almost angry at the Fröken.

"Hum!—You cannot become poor—Hum! My

dear Fröken, you have certainly forgotten the swallows' nest at the summer-house. The swallows also thought that they were rich, but you came and robbed them of their happiness—Hum! You cannot become poor!"

So he thought within himself, while Aurora and her betrothed were talking about their magnificent wedding on the next day.

Many, many years after that, there was great sorrow in the cottage, where Greta, who was now called old mother Greta, had breathed her last. She lay in her coffin, which was entirely covered with the most beautiful wild flowers; she lay there so smiling and calm, that one could see that her soul was at a feast in heaven, where it had been carried by God's angels.

Around the coffin stood her daughter and the latter's husband, with great tears in their eyes; they looked so tenderly upon the departed, whom they had loved so much in life, but rejoiced within themselves, however, for they knew that her life had been such that she was worthy the kingdom of heaven.

But only see at the foot of the coffin sits the well

known Red-cap, smiling pleasantly as usual, while the cap incessantly wags back and forth.

"Hum! that's the way one ought to die!" murmured he, and clasped his hands. "Many years ago the little Greta built houses in the sand and desired to live in a stately palace—now her wish is realized. God the Father has given her a mansion with Him up there, high above all the palaces of earth—So does it go with them, whom the Tomten blesses."

After the lapse of a few hours the dead body was carried out of the house of mourning, and lowered into its grave in the church-yard. The Tomten was at the funeral, and when the guests left the church-yard, he still sat on the grave, where he with clasped hands prayed for the dead. Before he went away from there, he planted a little bluebell on the grave and then took farewell, nodding kindly at Greta's last resting-place, the simple, unadorned grave-mound.

At the same time that old Greta was put in the ground, Fröken Aurora, now a countess, sat alone with her daughter at the low window, high up in a house situated in a dark, narrow alley in the city. Wealth had come to an end. She and her husband had not been long married, before the latter used up all their money, so that he was obliged to go abroad.

leaving his wife and child behind him. He had never been heard of since. The poor Aurora was then obliged to work, she like others. And she had for many years lived up there in her garret room. Now she was old and blind, so that her daughter had to work for them both. Aurora, however, had not allowed misfortune to crush her proud spirit. She had continually wept over what she had lost, without thinking that one can also be happy, when one is poor. Her many tears had ruined her eyes, and finally made her blind.

She now sat at the window. The daughter rose to go to the dressmaker's with what she had done that day. Aurora was then alone. Around her it was night, continual night; for she was deprived of the ability to see. Outside the window some swallows had built their nest. She had many times felt provoked, when she heard their joyous twitter, but she could do nothing to them, for she didn't see them.

"If I were only dead!" she murmured to herself. "I would then get rid of this misery!"

Just then came our old acquaintance, the Tomten, walking cautiously on the roof. The window stood open, he walked in and seated himself astride of the window-sill. Although he had come in so quietly, the blind woman heard him nevertheless. The blind

always hear better than those who see. She groped before her with her hands, to try to feel what it could be.

"You wish to die," said the little Tomten, and nodded as usual.

"Who is it that comes and disturbs me?" asked the old woman.

"Answer my question. You wish to die, do you say?"

"Yes, yes, let me die!"

"Are you well prepared to meet God up there?"

"I am so unhappy. I do not know that I have done anything sinful."

"Listen. I am the Tomten, who came and warned you, when you, as a child, many years ago, tore down the swallows' nest on the summer-house in your father's park. Have you forgotten this sin?"

The old woman answered nothing. She only kept silent. Two tears rolled from the darkened eyes down on the sunken cheeks. She clasped her hands and prayed.

"Father, forgive me the sin! I knew not what I did.

The good-hearted Tomten took off his red cap and wiped his eyes with it; he also wept.

"God has heard your prayer. Farewell to you!

Remember me to old Greta!" said he, and disappeared.

The old woman fell back in her chair. She was dead, and at length freed from her many sufferings. The swallows twittered by her corpse, and when the daughter came home they sang still. Soon the dead was carried out and lowered in the grave, where she at last found peace. Her daughter became happy. She had always been accustomed to feed her swallows, which she thought so much of. The Tomten still goes around and looks after people, to see how they live. Nothing is so insignificant that he does not take notice of it—remember that well!

IDA'S VISIT TO A STAR.

THERE was once a poor little girl, who was called Ida. She knew not her father's name, she did not remember a mother's bosom, she had no birth-day which could be celebrated, and no christening day with flowers. But yet she had found a home, and He, who clothes the lilies and strews seeds to the birds, had also cared for her.

A good old woman lived alone in her little cabin in the woods. She was just going out one morning when she found a large box outside her door; she opened it with curious wonder, and lo! in the box lay a little child, which raised its blue tearful eyes to the old woman. To be sure the old woman was poor; but she did not hesitate a moment to keep and bring up the foundling.

She called the little one Ida, and loved her very much. After she came, there was life and joy in the

cabin. She had been there nearly two years, when the old woman one day took the little one with her to church. When she started to go home, the pastor stopped her and inquired the child's name and who she was. The old woman related all.

"Then you do not know whether she is christened," said he thoughtfully.

The old woman was frightened, and they resolved that it should be done now, although it was late. The child had then just begun to talk; she stood in her little white dress before the pastor, and when he asked whether she wished to be baptized in our faith, she answered a plain "yes," courtesied deeply and looked at the pastor so seriously with her clear blue eyes. The baptismal water sprinkled her golden locks and fell like dew on the rosy cheeks. When the holy rite was ended, the child ran and threw herself in her foster-mother's arms, after which she gratefully kissed the pastor's hand.

The cabin was put in order and decorated with greens as for a festival. But who then stood as sponsors to little Ida? The old woman herself and a wise old man from the woods, called Skoglar, as well as the pastor and a beautiful Fröken,* who resided in the neighborhood. This Fröken was a wonderful

* The title of an unmarried woman of rank.

being. The old woman when young had seen her as beautiful as now. Time did not seem to have any power over her. She lived in an old castle, which was almost a ruin. It was on the banks of a lake and had a charming prospect.

Fröken Iduna Rosentröst was known in the whole section as wise, good and beautiful,—but a little strange. She was beloved by many; but was an object of wonder and censure to many more.

Some old maids who resided in a little country-place by the road, could not endure her. They tried their best to learn where she was born. Impossible! They found fault with her mode of life and her attire; they could not pardon it, that she wore rose-color and strolled around alone in the woods. Yes, they could not tolerate it, that she had such handsome dark hair, when it would have been much more proper and in accordance with her age to have gray, like other steady people,—in a word: she was to them a thorn in the flesh.

But more anon about Fröken Rosentröst; now we will speak of little Ida. Fröken Iduna lifted the newly-christened child on her lap and said: "Ida shall be allowed to wish for something, when she becomes old enough to form a desire."

The child played with a wonderful necklace, which

her beautiful godmother wore, and the latter placed it around the little girl's neck, as a memento of the day and promise. As Ida grew larger, she was often permitted to visit her godmother at the castle, and read in her beautiful books or look at the pictures. Sometimes she went out with her on the lake in a little sail-boat. Ah, what pleasure-trips, when the sky mirrored itself in the clear water, when gentle breezes filled the white sails and moved the strings of the Eolian harp, which was fastened at the mast-head! The lovely Iduna stood erect in the boat; the wind lifted her dark hair and fluttered her rose-colored dress; sweet tones hovered around them like invisible spirits, and the little girl leaned her golden head towards the water to throw bread-crumbs to three white swans that slowly followed the boat.

How happy little Ida was, when she was allowed to visit her godmother, or quietly stay at home in the cabin with the old woman; but, there were some other visits which were not so pleasant.

The old maids on the high-road had a married sister visiting them, who had brought her children with her. Little Ida was then invited to come and play with them. She put on her Sunday clothes, and the old woman went with her to the little yellow house with its drawn shades and close musty smell. The little

girl became oppressed about the heart, and when the old woman took leave of her, the tears already stood in Ida's eyes.

When she came in, everything looked dingy. Fly-paper stood on small plates in the window; the ladies were drinking coffee, and the children sat straight on their chairs. Ida felt as though she were suffocating. The little girl received a large cup of coffee, which she could not drink, and a strongly-spiced ginger-cake, which she could not eat. They now began to ask her questions about her god-mother; about how it was in the castle; whether the Fröken could possibly wear false hair or use rouge; what her expenses were a year, &c., &c.

The poor child was wearied out with all these interrogations, when at length one of the ladies said that the children might play in the next room. But these children did not know how to play. They could not make believe that small pine-cones were cows and columbine flowers doves. They stared at Ida's clothes, asked what everything cost, and who had given it to her. When this examination was ended, they began to tell of all the magnificent things which they had.

"I have a little gold watch," said one.

"I have a parasol and muff," said another little girl.

"My papa is a mayor and yours is only a judge," cried a boy, who had come with them from the city.

"I have a cloak with a hood to it, you haven't!" answered the other boy.

"But I have scrofula, I have," joined in a little pale girl consequentially; "mamma said so."

All were silent; they did not know what this was, and supposed that it was something magnificent, which they had not yet got. The sun went down—and at last the old woman came for her child. How glad Ida was when she had taken leave! She skipped along the well-known path, hugged the trees and threw kisses to the cabin.

"I wonder what the old woman supposes will become of that young one: she is bringing her up like a fine lady, in the midst of poverty," said one of the old maids.

"Do you know, aunt, she is so stupid," interrupted little Prippi, the pale girl with the scrofula; "she had never heard of flowing sleeves!"

Little Ida was good friends with all the flowers and insects in the woods. They were her playmates. The butterfly sat secure on her hand; the spider spun luck-threads to her; the lady-bug came humming and seated itself on her head; and the dragon-fly knew her so well. Ida could sit quiet for hours and look

at the drama which was enacted in the grass. An ant and a wasp fought a duel for a sweet pale convolvulus. A little light-green worm, which is called the surveyor, carefully measured the distance on a large maple leaf. The wasp, who was the challenger, made the attack, but had hard work to keep himself within bounds; he had a pair of midges as seconds, but the ant had two "goldsmiths." The wasp conquered, but notwithstanding this received the mitten from the beauty, who shook her pale head and offered her honey to a serious, sober-minded bee.

Ah, how much little Ida saw and heard in the woods! Still she preferred to look up to the stars, which twinkled so friendly through the sky's light vail. She had chosen a little clear star for her own, and greeted it every evening, when it came up over the tree-tops.

Now she was oftener with her godmother. Fröken Rosentröst was indeed an uncommon woman. So fine and so unassuming, so mild and noble, and yet so free, so above all prejudices.

She was very simply attired; no one had seen her wear an unnecessary ornament, a tasteless bracelet or a trivial brooch. Everything was peculiar and had some significance. She used perfumes a great deal, it was said, for one perceived an aromatic fragrance when

ever she approached. But from the color of her dress one could with certainty infer what perfume she used. Had she a rose-colored dress, which she generally wore during the season of roses, then the ladies in the yellow house could swear to it that she indulged in pure attar of rose, which is so costly. When she was clad in white, one knew the odor of the lily of the valley, narcissus or myrtle.

"Our finest ladies do not maintain this correspondence between colors and perfumes, and yet this country Fröken, whom nobody knows, cuts such a dash every day!" said the incensed old maids.

One afternoon little Ida went to see her godmother. The Fröken had just returned from a sick-visit in the neighborhood, where she had consoled a young girl who was suffering from a hidden heart-grief, and also restored harmony in a family where there had been a disagreement. A mild satisfaction transfigured her features; her gait was floating, and a delicious rose-fragrance greeted Ida.

The sun had set and the stars began to appear. Fröken Rosentröst seated herself on the slope of a hill and looked at the lake, where the flush of eve paled on the waves. Little Ida nodded welcome to her star, which shone forth clearly over the wood.

"Do you remember that I promised to fulfil a desire?" said Iduna; "express it now."

Ida's godmother, to speak the truth, was a fairy, otherwise she could not very well have promised this. The little girl sank into thought. What should she desire? Everything was so beautiful. Then she raised her eyes towards the star, and a wish, which had often before trembled upon her lips many star-light evenings, awoke again in her heart.

"I desire to go to that star, and see how it looks there."

"A childish desire," said Fröken Rosentröst smiling, "but it shall be gratified."

She rose and waved her white vail, as if making a signal. Then tones were heard like the Eolian harp, and little airy, winged beings came fluttering down. They brought with them a beautiful little balloon, which gently lowered itself to Ida's feet.

"Step in!" said the god-mother to the astonished girl.

Ida hesitated a little; but with confidence in Iduna's goodness and wisdom she took courage and stepped in the balloon. It raised itself gently. The tiny spirits of the air hovered encouragingly around Ida. Fröken Rosentröst waved farewell with her vail. Objects seemed smaller and smaller. The landscape

soon lay like a pretty miniature picture before Ida's gaze, and Fröken Rosentröst resembled a rose-bud amid the leaves. Soon she was no longer seen.

The woods now seemed only like dark patches, the crests of the snow-mountains like white clouds, the flush of eve faded away, in order to appear in some other part of the earth as the dawn. The clouds sailed slowly under her feet. Finally the earth floated only like an immense ball before Ida's sight. A wondering trepidation filled the little girl's breast. Her star shone clearer and larger; it gradually lost its rays: an unknown land with forms as yet undefined revealed itself through the mist. The balloon approached the new world. A peculiar balsamic odor met Ida, the balloon sank slowly and stopped on a crystal rock. Ida stepped out and seated herself on the declivity.

"What a wonderful world! Light blue grass waved gently in the wind; a stream, as of fire, flowed through the dale, and large white flowers grew on its banks. The fire stream fell in a cascade down the crystal rock. How it flashed and hissed. Clear sparks lay like dew-drops on the flowers. The flowers had no fragrance; but a quiet song rose from their cups, and the birds wafted perfume with every flap of their wings. Silver flowers and moss of pale silver

grew on the crystal rock, and inside of it one could see how precious stones were formed and gold spread its bright, shining veins. Swift-footed gazelles, with intelligent black eyes, and coal-red branching horns, bounded over the light blue grass. The sky had a mild rose color: light fleecy clouds floated over it, and the moonlight was more pale and silvery than with us. A castle of crystal raised its strangely-formed turret from the midst of a grove.

Ida longed to see the inhabitants of this land: they were not called human beings, but Stellarier. Soon she saw a group come out of the grove. They stopped and seemed to be enjoying the moonlight. They were delicate, almost transparent figures, with variegated butterfly or dragon-fly wings. They did not speak; every thought was read in their eyes and the indescribably expressive play of their features, in their lively gestures or perhaps pantomime dances. The little girl took courage and went around in the new land. Now she approached the Stellarier. They expressed joy at seeing her. But how surprised Ida was, when she regarded them! She did not know whether they were young or old. A being with sweet childish features, blue eyes and glittering silver locks around rosy cheeks, stood beside her and fanned her with her white wings.

Ida learned, that one was first old and infirm here and afterwards became young and beautiful. She did not understand this. Then she was taken to a moon-lit meadow. Large swelling fruits nodded in the wind,—they opened slowly, and out of them came small, gray, shrivelled old men and women. They grew and became younger. The wrinkles were smoothed, the eyes gained brightness and the cheeks roses: according as the soul developed. The body became thinner and more transparent, the nearer they approached death, the flight to a higher heaven. Then wings appeared, and beauty, goodness and intelligence beamed in the young faces, which were surrounded by silver locks. Ida became good friends with this Stellaria and learned many marvellous things from her.

"Do you know," said the beautiful, child-like being, speaking with her intelligent eyes, "do you know that we are related? It is not strange that we like each other: I am your grandmother!"

"*You!*" cried Ida amazed, looking at the beautiful child with the silver locks.

"Yes," answered the Stellaria, "my soul was too much fastened to the earth, when I left it. Patience and self-denial had I learned, love had I won; but glad, trusting simplicity I did not yet possess; I was

not like a child and could not enter into God's highest heaven, but must first go through this school. Now the wrinkles of the world's cares have left my brow, the glad flowers of innocence bloom on my cheeks, my mind is easy, my trust unshaken. An angel will soon come and take me up there." She looked up with a joyful, beaming expression. "Often have I floated down to earth on rays of light and visited you and my Skoglar in your dreams."

"Therefore this star became so dear to me!" exclaimed Ida.

She came to a fragrant living flower garden. The anemones looked as full of soul as blue eyes, and the roses' color rose and sank.

"What is this?" Ida asked her new friend.

"Noble thoughts, good feelings, which were not able to bloom or bear fruit on earth, but develop here."

The little Stellaria bowed reverentially and walked in silent veneration through the rose-garden, as over a church-yard. The moon had gone down; it was dark and the stars twinkled. A gentle rustling awoke the trees; it looked as if the sun had risen, although its gold was paler than with us.

"It is the *earth* which gives us its light now," said the Stellaria.

Ida was amazed. "The earth, with all its sorrow and want—the dark earth?"

"Oh, there is much that has a mild radiance—and if not, it would still shine from God's loving glance, which glorifies all it rests upon."

Ida clasped her hands and looked at the shining earth. Suddenly she remembered that her foster-mother, the good old woman, must be uneasy at her absence. She embraced Stellaria and stepped into the balloon. It sank rapidly; she saw her earth again. The landscape became clearer and larger. The balloon touched the ground.

Fröken Rosentröst sat waiting on the rock; then she saw in the moonlight a lovely child-face, brightly illumined, peep forth from behind a fleecy cloud. The next instant Ida lay in her arms. How glad the old woman became, as she sat all alone at her spinning-wheel, and heard Ida's voice. The dog leaped towards her and the cat arched its back. She went out into the woods again. The little white star-flowers in the grass she called Stellaria, a name they yet bear to-day.

The old foster-mother became ill; her spinning-wheel hummed no more. Ida took tender care of her. Finally one morning, when Ida leaned over the slumberer, she had passed into the eternal sleep.

Ida wept. But when she fell asleep, she dreamed that the good old soul dwelt in her star. She saw her become younger and younger, until at last, she

was of the same age as Ida, and they bound wreaths together in the blue meadow.

The old maids in the yellow house had been kind and helpful during the old woman's illness. "Perhaps they will go to my star after death," thought Ida, "but it will be very long before they become like children. Still, goodness is budding now."

Ida now went to her god-mother in the wood. When she opened the door, she stopped, amazed. A large company was assembled in the spacious, brilliantly illuminated saloon. Fröken Rosentröst, or the fairy Idalia, stood in all her radiance in the middle of the room and bade Ida welcome.

She took her god-daughter by the hand and introduced her to the illustrious circle: counts and dukes with their consorts; wealthy capitalists, poets and learned men. Two old people of humble appearance presented a singular contrast to the grand company.

"Ida," said the fairy Idalia, "look up your parents among these."

Ida was led to the high-born dames; she courtesied and spoke modestly but fearlessly to them; all desired such a daughter. The little girl looked searchingly in the eyes of all. She came to the old peasant woman in the simple dress. There she stopped. Had she, high above the earth, learned to estimate all

its magnificence? Had she learned to read faces and to value the soul's treasures most? I do not know,—but she fell on the old woman's bosom, clasped her to her heart and cried: "My mother!"

Sweet music then tinkled. All surrounded the happy ones. Ida scarcely perceived that her mother now sat on a throne, and was a beautiful duchess She was embraced by a noble chevalier, who was her father.

"We wished to prove whether splendor and magnificence could dazzle you; but you are worthy of us," said they.

"I had a war," said her father, "and therefore hid my child in the cabin of poverty."

Many of the fine ladies and gentlemen showed themselves as well-known peasant people, who had let the Fröken dress them up, and now shook hands with Ida.

Glorious above all description was the feast which the fairy Idalia had prepared for her; but Ida looked most into her mother's loving eyes. It seemed as if Ida resembled the Stellaria, for a higher beauty developed with years, if not of the body, at least of the soul, until she for the second time left this earth. Then it was death, that brought her to a higher heaven.

BY TELEGRAPH.

IN the beautiful garden there began to be life and motion, you may well believe. It was five o'clock in the morning. The sun already shone so genially upon the ground, and the birds sang in the trees, but down among the flowers, they were just engaged in a great work. A pair of spiders had that morning completed a long telegraph line—you have certainly seen and heard of such a thing?—which reached from one end of the garden to the other.

The large and beautiful Queen Rosa was to send her first dispatch on the new thread. Only she could not quite make up her mind who to address it to, for it had been decided that she should to-day invite the sponsors, as her little son, the sweetest of rose-buds, was going to be christened.

There was a great buzzing and chattering in the

whole garden. All displayed themselves in their newest clothes, which they had, in the early morning, made so fine and bright, that they were perfectly delighted over it.

The master of ceremonies, Herr Grasshopper, who belonged to the "nobility" itself, believed fully and firmly that he would be chosen as god-father, and therefore made such high leaps in his joy, that the green coat-tails flapped around him like a pair of birds' wings. His confidential friend, Monsieur Cricket, already went to tune his little violin, in order, as it behooves a conductor, to be able to execute the new opera he had composed in honor of the day in a faultless manner, when the important moment arrived.

Behind the skirts of his mother, Fru Cabbage-head, sat young Herr Hare, pricking up his ears so assiduously. The treasure-digger and millionare, Mole, lay and waited for the note of invitation. He could for his part be sure of being invited, for in the first place, he could tell so many wonderful things, and then he always brought rich christening presents with him.

The gentlemen telegraphists, the nimble and skilful spiders, worked zealously, in order to have everything in readiness by the time the queen should be pleased to give the word for the general invitation.

All at once Rosa raised her eyes and threw a proud glance around her. The Spider by her side immediately gave the signal on his thread. All began to arrange their toilette, in the garden. None of either the gentlemen or ladies wished to have a single spot or a speck of dust on their clothes.

"What a useful invention that telegraph is," whispered one to another. "From the other end of our land, we receive a hint when we ought to trim ourselves."

"Yes, I should think so. But a hundred years ago, how could they get along then?"

"See there!"

Rosa nodded. The spiders sent the intelligence of it along the line. They all straightened themselves up, and the master of ceremonies arranged his standing-collar. Rosa whispered something to her telegraphist. Immediately it was known over the whole garden: Herr Grasshopper was really to be god-father at the christening. Those invited made themselves ready and went off to the queen. Still some were obliged to stay at home, on account of important duties; as Fröken Daisy, for example, who had to see to her house. All were assembled. Joy and festivity prevailed. Just then two children came running down

in the garden. They did not see the new telegraph line, but ran against it and destroyed it.

All those who were not at the party, mourned and regretted being absent so much, but they could learn nothing about those that were there, for the telegraph threads were broken, and they were left entirely in ignorance.

THE OWL'S PARTY.

ONE day the Owl mother said to the Owl father: "See here, my old man! what do you say to our having a party the day after to-morrow for our neighbors here in the woods?"

"Klihwitt!" answered the Owl father. "Do you not know that I am in for everything that you wish, my little woman?"

Such ought husbands to be.

"Our house is in the best order," resumed the Owl mother. "We can treat our guests to all sorts of berries and the most delicious cat-steak. Abundant water, after the last rain, has collected in the crevices of the rocks down below here. Now shall we invite them to dinner or supper?"

"That question is of the greatest importance," responded the owl father. "For my part I rather prefer dinner, but I like supper just as well. You ought to decide yourself."

"Well, then, we will get up a supper; for at that time of day, we begin to have the use of our eyes, so that we can see our company, you understand. Done! is it settled that we shall give a supper day after to-morrow?"

"It is settled."

"But who shall be sent around with the invitations, and who ought to be invited?"

"Ah, my dearest wife," screamed the Owl father, "that is for you to say. You know that I agree to whatever you do.'

"Well yes, then I will speak to the Woodpecker and ask him to fly around with the invitations. His name sounds so servant-like, and at parties in all nice houses, a servant must be seen, even if he is borrowed for the occasion. As to whom we ought to invite, I propose: Herr Wood-grouse and his wife, Herr Black-cock and his wife, Herr Hawk and Fru Kite, Herr Chatterer, the Magpie and her husband, the Crow and her husband, Herr Cuckoo, Mamsell Dove, and lastly Herr Thrush, whom we must not forget, as we ought to seem to encourage art. Besides we show him charity, if we allow him to fill his stomach with us. Have you any objection to make to those proposed?'

"No indeed, my dear!" The Owl father's will was in all things subject to his wife's.

Then the Woodpecker flew around with the notes of invitation. No one sent any excuses, for all expected a delightful entertainment.

So the Owl's castle soon swarmed with the most select assemblage of ladies and gentlemen.

The Wood-grouse and his wife occupied the foremost place of honor. He was a high official at the Court as well as poet in praise of the Eagle, the king of birds. She was maid of honor to his majesty's consort.

The second rank was occupied by the Blackcock and his wife. The former had recently been appointed stage-manager, as he had made himself known as a smart actor. The latter was less happily endowed in a mental respect, so that some scoffer had given her the name of Hen.

The Hawk knew how to put himself forward, so he came next in order. In his capacity of master of ceremonies and critic, he was quite distinguished, and even feared for his sharp claws in the newspapers of the woods.

The Chatterer was the dandy of the woods, a little, very polite gentleman, with the title, honor and dignity of chamberlain.

The Magpie and her husband, the Crow and her husband, formed a group by themselves at the party

in the fine house. They were people of the middle classes, to whom money had procured an entrance into society. The ladies are here mentioned first on purpose, for Herr Magpie and Herr Crow were nothing but their wives' husbands. That is to say: the gentlemen were henpecked.

By good rights we ought to have expressed ourselves about the Cuckoo. He was the solo singer at the opera, the favorite of all the aristocracy, a great charlatan, in short—a veritable cuckoo.

We have made ourselves guilty of another neglect, in not mentioning the Dove next to the Hawk. She was a melancholy and sentimental creature, whose sighs are world-known. No bird has yet known how to coo so beautifully as she.

Finally we repeat about the Thrush, that he found himself on the list of invited guests, because one could not slight him without danger of seeming indifferent to art. Besides it was showing him a charity to allow him to satisfy his appetite, when one had such an abundance.

Thus the guests of the Owl family presented themselves to the especial amusement of the Tomtits and Sparrows, who in the door outside the windows of the supper-room, constituted the gaping multitude.

Ah, what a magnificent supper the Owls had pre-

pared, with berries and the most delicious cat-steak and water, as much as one wanted to drink, in the crevices of the rocks!

After supper, Fru Owl asked the Cuckoo to give them a little music. He accordingly set up his "ku-ku" so that the whole woods reverberated with it. All bestowed their liveliest thanks upon him.

"But you, Herr Thrush," resumed the hostess, "you are also a singer. Please let us have the pleasure of hearing you."

The Thrush stepped forward and began to sing. His tones rang forth so pure. It was not the Cuckoo's monotony, neither the latter's obvious self-love in the performance; it was at once masterly and modest. But when he ceased, he was not greeted with the same applause as the Cuckoo, for he was a poor, humble individual, and besides his voice had not raised itself in praise of the large birds. Therefore he said to himself: never will I sing for Wood-grouse and Blackcock, for Owls or Chatterers. I cannot flatter and lie; but I will sing for the Tomtits and Sparrows. They will understand me."

And the Thrush from that time became the little birds' songster. As such he is loved and admired for his tones.

THE KEY.

IN the country, with a rich peasant, served a poor youth. He was called Hans. His parents were dead, and he had no one in the whole wide world who cared for him, so it seemed to him. His master sent him out in the forest to chop wood. But the work went slowly. Hans often let his axe rest and stood staring straight before him.

One day, when he as usual stood in this way, he saw a little gray-clad man come from a bush directly opposite.

"What are you pondering upon?" inquired the man.

"Oh," answered Hans, "I think it is tedious to stand here all the time and chop wood. My pay is small, and my master says that I am the worst one on the whole place. The other fellows call me Lazy Hans and are scarcely willing to be in my company on account of my shabby clothes; but with so little

pay as I have, one cannot afford to get any better ones."

"I will help you," said the man, "but you must promise me never to let your laziness tempt you to do anything wrong. Here I give you," continued he, "a key, which will one day put into your hands a treasure, far greater than you can now imagine. I tell you no more now; but from the first one you meet to-morrow, you shall receive further instructions."

Hans took the key from the man's hand and stood there quite astonished looking, at it long after the man had disappeared.

When he came home that evening, he sat quiet and reflected.

The other hands made fun of him and said:

"Now Hans is tired, he has worked so much in the woods to-day, that he is not able to speak."

Neither had he any desire to eat.

"This goes a little too far," said the hands then; "he is so lazy, that he cannot even eat."

"Ha, ha, ha! Hi, hi, hi!" and so they all laughed at him.

But Hans said nothing, and the next morning he was earlier than usual on his way to his work in the woods again. He looked around on all sides as he

walked. He saw no one either behind or before him. Finally he seated himself on a stone, and the usual discouragement began to present itself. In front of him, by an old stump of a tree, was a large ant-hill. Hans sat, as he was accustomed to, and stared straight ahead. A large ant came creeping toward him. She became larger and larger. Her head grew until it finally was as big as his own. She placed herself erect. A little blade of grass, which she held in one of her claws, now looked like a regular staff, and her brown skirt was dainty and fine as the most costly silk dress. She looked at him with her red eyes, but it was a friendly gaze, and Hans was not abashed at it.

"What have you to think about?" asked the ant.

"Why, I have received a key," began Hans.

"Ah," resumed the ant, "then I understand how it was obtained. I can tell you what to do."

Hans listened to her with surprise, and she continued:

"This key you will never have any benefit from, unless you follow the advice I now give you: Be *industrious* and *persevering* like me! But if you follow this advice of mine, you will some time, happy and contented, reach the aim to which the key will

lead you. And if you keep me in memory, it will go easier."

She now gave him a little light tap on the breast with her staff, shrank together to her former minuteness and disappeared in the ant-hill.

Hans felt himself affected by the tap in a peculiar manner. With strength and resolution he rose from his place and swung the axe so sturdily, that every stroke took doubly as deep as before. And in this way he did more work and felt less tired than any day previous.

The evening came, and when the wood was drawn home, his master remarked that Hans had chopped more than any of the others.

"If he keeps on in this way," said the master, "I will certainly have to increase his wages next year."

Then Hans smiled, and rejoiced at the thought of being able to buy himself a pair of new boots. And so passed one week after the other. Hans worked with undiminished zeal, and his master became better and better satisfied, and placed all the greater confidence in him.

But soon the other hands became envious, and they now ridiculed him and mocked him for his zeal.

"He now hews so energetically, that in the end he can never keep his arm still," said one.

"Yes, he is a regular wood-chopper," joined in another.

Then they all began to laugh, and from that day they called him the wood-chopper. Hans, however, did not take this to heart, but let them laugh; but when fall came, and the master kept his promise and gave Hans higher wages, their animosity increased, and finally they made up a plan between them to bring Hans into disgrace. They talked together in secret; but no one noticed what they were about.

"Then we will call the master there just at the right moment," whispered they, "and never a word will he believe of all that Hans asserts. He will be turned away, and then it will be we instead who get higher wages."

The plan was now ready. In the evening when Hans came from his work and met his comrades in the laborers' department, they began thus:

"Poor Hans, you look very tired; you work too hard, and cannot hold out in this way for any length of time."

"No, and it does not lie in his real nature either to go on at that rate," joined in another.

"And he wouldn't need to," added a third.

"No, he certainly would not," resumed the first.

"Look here, Hans, if you will now go in com-

pany with us, we will soon bring about glad days. You see, now during harvesting, one can always do himself a little side-service, when he, like you, has his master's confidence, and can get hold of the keys to the storehouse and barn. It will go easy as a dance to fill a sack with rye sometimes, and in the twilight lower it down through the opening into the back-yard, where it can lie hidden in the bushes until one gets time to take it away. There will be no difficulty in selling it, and then we will share the profit. To-morrow night it could be done quite well."

Hans sat silent and listened.

"Well?" asked they, when he delayed to answer.

"Ah! I will consider the matter until then," replied Hans; "but now your talk has made me sleepy. Good-night to you!"

But in the morning Hans went to his master and requested a discharge. And when the latter inquired the reason; whether he was not contented with his place, or what the cause could be, he merely answered:

"I am not discontented with my place; but it might be pleasant to look around in the world, and try one's luck in other directions."

But then his master's daughter, the pretty Hanna, looked at him with a sorrowful expression, and when

her father now said: "I would rather give you a still higher salary than have you go," Hans resolved to stay another year. When night came he again met the other hands.

"Well, Hans," inquired they, "have you now done according to agreement?"

"I have not made any agreement with you," replied Hans, "and I had made up my mind not to continue in the same service with you after this day; but my master has persuaded me to remain, and promised me a still higher salary. Now I shall be here a year longer, and your silly project I do not care to talk about. It would only injure you and yet not benefit me; but beware of attempting anything by yourselves, for then I will no longer keep silent."

From that day they did not laugh at Hans any more; but they were afraid of him. After a time, a well was to be dug a little distance from the place. They had already dug down quite a distance, and the labor became heavier and heavier; one man after the other became exhausted and left off. No one wished to continue the work. Then came Hans from the woods and saw them standing around, resting.

"Ah!" said he, "this is no worse than one can bear."

And so he went down into the deep well and began

to work. The men looked at each other. They had the same thought, all three:

"Perhaps he cannot always hold his tongue, but may tell our master about the proposition we made him; in that case we will have served out our time here. Now we might get rid of him and at once put an end to all fear."

The accident might have happened of itself. Daringly, one of them seized a spade and began to shovel down the earth, which lay in a large heap by the side of the well.

Hans would soon have been suffocated; but just at this moment the master was seen coming along the road. They were obliged to desist from their wicked purpose, and Hans's smothered cries, which were heard from below, summoned the master to the place. But none of them would confess the truth. They had heard Hans's cries and hastened forward to assist him; the heap of earth had begun to tumble down of itself; nobody could prove the contrary. The master, however, had his own opinion, and the result was that all three of the wicked hands had to leave. This was what they had gained through their fine plans.

Soon came new hands, and Hans lived in the best relation with his new comrades, and the master's con-

fidence in him grew day by day. But still Hans was not exactly happy. When he saw the pretty Hanna, as she sat at her spinning-wheel, turning the wheel swiftly and drawing out the soft flax in long fine threads, he sighed deeply and reflected that he was only a poor laboring-man, and that Hanna was the rich master's lovely daughter.

"No, Hans," said he to himself, "you can never think of having Hanna for a wife. Cast aside all such silly thoughts."

But still Hanna's image stood plainly before him wherever he went. Poor Hans! if the wicked hands had now been there, they would surely have laughed at him again.

Hanna had many suitors. But one after the other had to go away, without Hanna being able to prevail upon herself to yield any of them her consent. Finally came the son of a wealthy neighbor and proposed. Her father then said:

"Hanna, now I wish you to decide. A richer suitor you can never have, and he lives in the adjoining place. This suits so well, that it never can be better."

"Ah no, father," answered Hanna, "it does not suit me at all. I like Hans, and no one but Hans will I have for a husband."

Then the father became angry.

"Have I now fed and taken care of the scamp to see him snap up my only daughter?" said he. "No, that must not be! He shall immediately quit my service. My rich and beautiful Hanna shall never become the wife of a simple out-door servant."

Hans was obliged to remove. But when he took leave, Hanna promised that if she was not allowed to become his wife, she would never become anyone else's. And Hans promised to toil and strive, until he became a rich man. Then he would come back.

And so Hans started off to seek a new place. He took the road through the woods. He walked there long in sad thoughts. By and by he came to an old stump; he sat down to rest. Right before him stood a thick hawthorn bush. Hans regarded it closely and fancied that he recognised it; it was the same bush from which he had seen the gray man come out, who had given him the key. And just as he so sat there and stared, the bush opened and the little gray old man again stood before him.

"How do you do, Hans?" said the old man. "Have you lost the key I gave you? You look so doleful."

"No," answered Hans, "I have the key here," and he showed a ribbon around his neck, to which hung

the key. "But little service is it likely to do me, for I am anyhow excluded from all life's joy."

He thought of Hanna and drew a deep sigh.

"Nonsense," said the old man; "it is not worth while to lose courage as soon as all that. We are many times nearer the aim than we believe. What I promised you shall be accomplished; but do not forget the condition I affixed to it: '*Give not way to temptation!*' And now do not sit here resting any longer, but proceed quickly on your way."

And Hans rose and continued his course. He soon reached the edge of the woods, and now entered upon a large, broad road; it was the great highway. In which direction should he now turn off? Right or left? He stood and deliberated a moment.

"I shall take the same direction as the first bird I see," thought he.

"Qvirr! qvivirrr!" sounded beside him. A little bird hopped forth from the stone wall. It turned to the right. It flew a little distance; then it alighted in the road and took a seed in its bill, after which it raised its wings and continued its flight in the same direction. Consequently, to the right should Hans go. And he walked straight ahead.

At sundown he came to a peasant's cabin. There he might have lodging for the night, and to the owner's inquiries, he gave this account of himself:

"He had left his service and was now out to seek a new one. He was both willing and able to work."

"Well then," said the peasant, "you come in the nick of time. At the country-seat, a mile from here, an extra hand is just now needed, and you can certainly get the situation if you present yourself. But he is a stern master and demands steady work. Yet he also pays well."

When the morning came, Hans bent his steps to the country-seat, and after a few questions on one side and answers on the other, he was engaged. The master was a severe man and one heavy job after the other was imposed upon Hans. He often stood in the field and broke stones so diligently, that the sweat fell in great drops from his brow. Seldom could any man remain more than a month, but Hans was persevering, and now he had already been there a half year.

"You are a smart worker," said the master, "and I will give you the recompense you deserve."

Then Hans rejoiced. He thought of Hanna and his strength was renewed.

One day, when he was on his way home from his work, he had to cross the large turnpike. The moon had just risen, and by its light he saw something glittering in the grass at the edge of the road.

What could it be? He hastened to the spot and soon had a heavy purse in his hand. He opened it. One gold piece after the other rolled out in his hand. He could count many hundred. Here he now held in his hand a whole fortune. Now he could go to Hanna's father and count over all the money to him. He was now a rich man himself; the neighbor Pehr could no longer stand in his way. But a pang struck his heart. He hastily put his hand there. It pained him, and at the same instant he felt the key under his fingers. The old man's warning sounded in his soul:

"*Give not way to temptation!*"

And he dismissed all thoughts of keeping the treasure he had found.

On reaching home he showed the purse to his master, and the latter recognised it as belonging to a rich Count, who always travelled this road once a year, on the journey between his estates. And then, when the Count recovered the lost treasure, he accorded Hans a large sum of money as a reward. Hans received it with satisfaction, and sewed it in between the folds of his jacket.

"Hanna ought to know this," thought he.

But the Count had taken so great a fancy to Hans, on account of the honesty he had shown, that he

wanted to have him in his service, and came himself to offer him the place.

"You shall have the superintendence over all my people. You are well fitted for it, for I know one can rely upon your integrity," said the Count.

And such an advantageous offer Hans of course accepted with joy. He attended faithfully to his duties, and the Count called him his right-hand man. Hans always accompanied the laborers to the wood and field, and worked himself more zealously than any other. When a time had thus elapsed, it happened one day that there was a deep dike to be dug in the meadow. Many hands were there employed. The spades were wielded in even measure and Hans himself led the row. Suddenly his spade struck against something hard. He shovelled away the earth, bent down and saw a large iron chest. He had now found something worth while. They all helped to lift up the chest; the Count was apprised of the event, and when he arrived, a closer examination was instituted. On the lock of the chest they discovered, in raised characters, these words:

"Have you the key which opens me,
All my contents I give to thee."

The Count took from his pocket a large bunch of

keys One after the other was tried in vain; none fitted. But now Hans stepped forward.

"I have a key here," said he, untying the little ribbon he wore round his neck; "and I have been told, that through it I would become the owner of a great treasure."

He placed the key in the lock, and it opened immediately. The lid sprang up, and the whole chest was full of gold and silver coin. And the Count said:

"Yes, according to the inscription, the casket with its contents should belong to the one who has the key to the lock; and no one can thus dispute Hans's right of ownership to this great treasure. That it has been found on my estate is something to which I attach no importance. I congratulate Hans with all my heart, and am rejoiced that the treasure falls to a person who, through work, diligence and perseverance has made himself deserving of a large recompense."

Who was now glad if not Hans? He had come into possession of a great fortune, and naturally hastened home to offer his suit to the faithful Hanna, whose father no longer had any objection to make. But it seemed to Hans, that Hanna was the greatest treasure he had found.

And now we have seen how lucky it was for the lazy Hans, that he met the little gray man in the woods.

THE APPLE FAMILY.

IN a kitchen garden on a carrot-bed sprouted, simultaneously with the carrots, seven apple-seeds. The gardener, who sowed seeds, had while at work, eaten an apple and thrown away the core, which contained seven good seeds. This happened to fall on the bed, became buried in the soil, and from each seed now grew a plant. All seven plants were thus brothers and sisters and kept close together. The carrot-plants looked at them with contempt. "What have you to do here?" said they, "the bed is for our benefit!" The young plants realized it full well, and as the carrot-plants' conversation was far superior to theirs, they kept silent very dutifully. They even kept still when one arrogant carrot-plant after another spread itself out with its large leaves and gave them a cuff. The carrots then said, half in jest: "Beg your pardon! it was the wind's fault. He thinks so much of our beautiful

fine-grained leaves and caresses them, and what has just happened, occurred in the sport with him. You are so spindling, that one can scarcely see you."

"We will protect you from the hot sunbeams, which you, poor creatures, do not seem able to bear," said others, and grew together over the little apple-plants; but their intentions, however, were not so noble: they meant to stifle the tender little shoots. I could never have believed that carrots, who in themselves are so sweet, could be so wicked.

But more impertinent than they were various weeds. They wished not only to choke the plants, but also to deprive them of nourishment.

"We are the rightful offspring of the soil," said they, "and do not need the gardener's care like you poor things, the carrots included, and we bloom and leave seed before you comprehend what it all means."

Soon they too had grown above them all and stood in full blossom; some yellow, others white, and so on. The nettles, who were the most impudent, and called themselves the defenders of their country, had, however, the most insignificant flowers.

But now came the servant-girl to clear out the bed, and the carrots became very glad, for the odious weeds were pulled up. The apple-plants, however, did not know how it would be with them, for had not

the carrots said that the bed was solely for their benefit? The girl came nearer to them, they trembled; she took hold of them and tried to pull them up; they held as fast to the earth as they could. The gardener, who was looking on, said: "Let us see; why they are apple-plants! Don't pull them up; they may one day yield rich fruit. Rather pull up the nearest carrots, so that the young plants can have more room." The girl did so.

The up-rooted carrots sighed, deploring the wrong that had been done them, and soon died of resentment. The other carrots saw this, but without troubling themselves in the least about the suffering of their friends and relatives: they flourished so much the more. The apple family were joyful and whispered to each other: "We are allowed to be here! Now let us grow gladly!" And they each and all thought of the gardener's words: "They will one day give rich fruit!"

The young plants soon became so large, that they could overlook the whole bed, and they were surprised to find that the carrots, which in the beginning were larger than they, now kept themselves so low to the ground. But when the carrots were dug up in the fall, and the trees saw that good little children ate of them, and heard them say: "How sweet the carrots

are!" some of the trees became troubled, because they were not good for anything and no one wished to have them. Others, on the contrary, thought that it was well, for so they were allowed to remain in peace.

The young trees now stood alone in the bed. It became colder and colder, and they began to freeze. But then Autumn wandered through the garden, a large, powerful, rather melancholy ruler. He swung his mighty sceptre over our little saplings and said in a strong voice: "Drop your leaves and go to rest! My brother, the Winter, will soon come with icy cold, and if you are not asleep then, you will freeze to death."

The little young trees had never before dropped their leaves, and did not know how to do it; but most of them tried, however, and they succeeded. But one of them did not wish to obey, for he desired to grow more and become larger than his brothers and sisters. Another said: "Drop my leaves—I do not know how, and shall not trouble myself about it." Then came the Winter, with storms and snow. Those of the brothers and sisters who had gone to sleep, did not feel him; but the two disobedient ones, who had not dropped their leaves, froze to death at Christmas time; and when Spring the following year swung his golden sceptre and commanded: "Wake up! the

Winter is gone! I shall tend you with warm love!" two of the apple-trees stood with withered leaves and a dry stalk, and could not behold the Spring's glory.

Now came the gardener with a large spade, dug up the young trees, who in consequence of disobedience suffered death, threw them away, and transplanted the other five in a nursery, in order to bring them up after the custom of the time. But one of them became discontented with her new place. "There at home in the carrot-bed," thought she, "it was better." She did not care to take any nourishment and hung her head, withered and forlorn. Finally the gardener said: "What a miserable thing you are!" and pulled it up. Now there were only four alive; but these grew more or less thriftily. Autumn came again with the same command as the former year; they obeyed immediately, and Winter could not and would not occasion them any harm.

The following spring the gardener came with a sharp knife in his hand. He cut the young trees square off, one foot above the ground, split the remaining stalk and inserted a pointed slip of another apple-tree, put salve on the wound, and this he called grafting. How this pained the trees! One of them felt so bad over it, that it shortly afterwards died. Another thought: "I see just how it is: I am expect-

ed to receive the young slip hospitably and provide for it; but I shall take good care not to do so." And so it grew out in a number of new shoots at the side, and the slip withered up. The tree laughed, because it had played the gardener such a good trick. But the gardener did not understand the joke, and pulled up this tree like the one that had just died. The other two trees were more hospitable, and the new grafts were soon domesticated with them, and they grew together like a single person.

One of the trees was very much given to reflection and not always satisfied with itself. It had seen how the weeds in a few weeks developed into large plants, full of blossoms and seeds; how the carrots, the very first summer, had become large and sweet, and then it saw, how the young strawberry plants, in the bed beside the nursery, every year bloomed and gave beautiful fruit. "What am I good for?" thought the tree; "the same sun shines upon me and I drink in his rays as much as I am able; and yet it is so dark within me. The gardener has more trouble with me than with all the others; how do I repay it?" But the other tree laughed at his brother's crotchets, and said: "I do not think about giving fruit or being useful: I only wish to live and be happy!" And

happy he was, and grew more luxuriantly than the anxious brother.

The gardener pruned the young tree in the meantime, so that it should become handsome. The anxious one realized the gardener's good intentions and yielded willingly; the other was also obliged to keep still, but when the gardener cut off *one* branch, the tree shortly afterwards shot out *ten* others. One fall both trees were dug up and were placed so far apart that they could no longer see or talk to each other. One still longed to become a useful tree; but the other continued to only amuse himself. After two years' time the former felt within him something which he himself could not explain, but which made him very happy. It was the consciousness of an inner wealth, which was so great, that it hadn't space enough in the heart of the tree, but wished to break forth into the light. And it did so too; it showed itself towards autumn, in hope-giving buds.

The whole winter through the tree dreamed of blooming and fruit-bearing.

The spring came; the tree awoke and now strived to realize its glorious dreams. In a few days its whole crown was full of the loveliest white blossoms, and the tree felt inexpressibly happy. All the small growths around looked up in surprise and said:

"Good gracious, how beautiful your flowers are!" The weeds themselves could not help admiring them. And the children went by and said just what the plants had uttered, and the pretty white blossoms blushed modestly and became still prettier.

But the spring passed, the blossoms fell off, and the tree mourned that its blooming had been so short. But the Summer consoled it and said: "Be calm, and form into fruit that which has only been blossoms: I will help you!" And it was done. At first the apples, a little afraid, concealed themselves under the leaves, but they soon became so large, that the leaves could no longer shelter them. The children, who now and then plucked and ate them, made a face, and spit out the fruit, saying: "Mercy! how sour they are!" The tree gave heed to this criticism, and endeavored thenceforth to make the fruit palatable, and it not only succeeded, but they also became handsome, and hung on the branches in gold and crimson garb. And the gardener came and clapped his hands with delight over his tree, and the tree was so glad, yet could not understand how all this happiness had come about, but shook its head, so that the fruit fell to the ground at every motion it made. The children picked up the fruit and looked gratefully at the tree.

It now continues to bear fruit from year to year.

Still, during the Christmas holidays, when the tree in the garden stands in ice and snow, and has sunk into a deep slumber, its fruit is seen at the childrens' festival, enhancing the joy. And the tree dreams of all the Christmas light and all the beautiful Christmas-trees, upon which its fruit hangs, and is happy even in its dreams.

But the other tree, which did not care to give fruit, was long ago cut down and split into wood for the fireplace.

IN A FORGE.

PETTER FRIBERG, blacksmith, had in his youth been a gay soul, who gladly raised his glass and emptied it, and had always been among the first and last guests at the ale-house in the village. It then frequently happened that the merry comrades came in conflict with each other, and on one such occasion he was so thoroughly battered and bruised, that he could not wield the sledge for many a long day. His wife declared that it served him just right, and as he almost always gave in to her, he perhaps thought so too, although he said nothing. Yet to hear those words repeated every hour, may have seemed to him rather monotonous, for he twisted and turned sometimes like a worm in its bed, and it almost looked as if he would willingly have crept away, if this had been possible for him. At one such uncomfortable moment an organ-grinder happened to stroll by; his

music was like David's tones to Saul, and although his wife grumbled, a shilling went for the purchase of some songs. The blacksmith began to read the verses, and soon forgot his sore feelings, his aches and his plasters; then he took out of his chest all that there was in the shape of a book, namely a biography of Lasse-Maja.

He had never looked in a book before, and he could just let it alone now too, thought his wife, as he did not wish to read that which was useful and instructive, for example, "The Lost Sheep," or "A Sinful Shoemaker's Three Terrible Nights," of which her library consisted, and from which she derived so much edification, that she could now count herself among the elect and converted. But her husband was inexorable. He did not care to expose himself to any such result, and assured her, that it was quite sufficient, if one of them ran to revival meetings, and that they would all go to perdition, if he also got started. His wife told him to at least have shame enough not to say "perdition," and rushed out, whereby he was left in peace with his reading. The hours went but too fast in this way, however, and he found to his surprise, that it could be fully as pleasant to hold a book in his hands, as the glass. From that time there was a change in his life, the noisy drinking-parties had lost

a great part of their attraction and he visited them more and more seldom, and many saved pennies he now rather bestowed upon an entertaining book, than upon the ale-shop. His friends affirmed, that he was "not himself at all," and that "something had come over him;" but the blacksmith laughed, and said that if they themselves would be tempted to read a little, they would certainly find more enjoyment in an interesting story, than in a stupefying spree, and that he could not sufficiently thank God for the day when he for the first time took a book in his hand. And so passed the years.

To see a forge turned into a reading-room appeared rather unnatural, at least so thought the blacksmith's wife, although her husband found it both natural and in place. In the twilight-hour, or at times, when the work was not so pressing, he liked to take a little recreation, especially when Mother Friberg considered it necessary for her soul's salvation to attend some religious meeting, or had some important errand to a neighbor's. And such had she every time any new event occurred in the village; and while the worthy dames were drinking coffee together, they decided what one ought to believe or not to believe; for example, whether it was the inefficient Mother Eskelson herself, or her smart servant-girl, who had spun the

fine flax they now set up in their loom; or whether the pastor had proposed to the squint-eyed Mamsell Ulla, the dean's daughter, or to the manufacturer's nice little governess, or whether another wealthy neighbor would succeed in catching the new schoolmaster for his Else.

It was this latter question that Mother Friberg found of great moment to discuss, when she a certain afternoon started off to her good friend. The question was this time more than usually important. The Fribergs' eldest child was an eighteen-year-old daughter, also bearing the name of Else, but in her mother's eyes a grain smarter than her namesake. But yet the schoolmaster had not had sufficient good taste to even look at her. In spite of this, it had so happened, that Mother Friberg at the first glance at the young man decided to have him for her daughter's husband. He seemed to her to have particularly suitable qualities for the purpose, such as a regular salary and some thousand thalers in inheritance from his father. Further than this Mother Friberg knew nothing about him, but this was quite sufficient to decide her—mothers in general seldom consider it necessary to know any more about their future sons-in-law.

Before she left home Mother Friberg had cast a suspicious glance into the forge. But as the sparks

crackled around the anvil, she gave her son Petter, who held the iron, a nod and a half ditto to her husband, who was hammering away so lustily, that the place echoed.

"I am compelled to go out, to exchange a half pound of white wool for black. Petter's pantaloon stuff will otherwise be too light, and he would get it dirty very soon."

"That is right," said her husband, without seeming to think of what he said; it was only a manner of speech which he was often in the habit of employing towards his better half. He had come to the conclusion, that these three small words are in marriage especially fitting and appropriate.

His wife had turned her back and was out, but after a minute she stuck her head in again. "See that the wheels are done this evening; you know, father, what a hurry there is."

"Yes, you are quite right!" The sparks stood around him like the tail of a comet, and as Mother Friberg also found it all right this time, she took her departure in earnest.

Without saying a word the old blacksmith struck the anvil for a while, but there was a certain restlessness in his looks and motions.

"Go ahead, Petter; by my soul, it is not so stupid

to be a blacksmith, when even a god has followed that trade. Blow the bellows! Yes, so much can I say, that Eugene Aram would not have been able to ingratiate himself with me."

Petter was accustomed to follow his father's train of thought, and it often flew from a complicated lock to an unhappy lady of the castle, or from a horse-shoe to a love-sick pair. He answered therefore with a decided shake of the head: "Nor with me either."

"I would immediately have seen what sort of man he was," resumed the blacksmith, "not to take folks by the hand—didn't I tell you from the first moment that there was something wrong about him?"

"Yes, I never believed him," answered Petter, decidedly. "No, one must be able to give an honest hand-shake and look folks in the eye. Carl XII. did that, I bet my life!"

"You would certainly have been one of his brave boys!"

The little fellow straightened himself up. "Father, you can't imagine what I think of that Aurora. By Jove, she deserved all she got!"

"You mustn't say 'By Jove,' Petter; if your mother heard you, she would box your ears. But I just wonder how long she will be gone to-day?"

"As usual, until the middle of the afternoon, I suppose."

"I haven't peeped much into those illustrated papers that I bought the last time I was in town, and mother doesn't know that I have them, either."

Petter looked as if it would also be his father's best course not to let her know it.

"Nothing surpasses reading," resumed the blacksmith; "it keeps one out of much evil, and gives reflection. Look out, Petter, don't let go of the wheel. Yes, I am certainly not afraid of mother, but I do not wish to provoke her with my books; she has such a pain in her back, poor thing, and it makes her a little cranky."

While he was talking, the blacksmith had brought out the skull of a horse, in which he hid things away, and laid it on the anvil. "You see, here I put Gralle's old noddle, but we are not going to immediately plunge into the anatomy of the horse, which the veterinary surgeon lent me, and which he said would be so useful to us when we have to shoe the old creatures. But now we will first read about the Arabian horse here in the monthly." And the blacksmith patted the gray paper cover with satisfaction. "You are all in a sweat, Petter, and must be tired besides. Ah yes, I can certainly read to you a little, while we

are resting, for the work will be done anyhow this evening."

Petter had jumped up on the fireplace. His father's reading was always to him as solemn as a sermon, and he listened to it constantly with clasped hands. But scarcely had the old man read a few lines, before the door was flung open and his wife showed herself in the frame.

"I might have known that it would be just this way," she began. "Thou, my eternal Creator! What are you thinking of, father! Oh dear, my back, I believe it will go in two! You're a good-for-nothing, miserable fellow. Ah, that I should be bound to such a sinner! Yes, it is frightful to see you sitting with that ungodly stuff in your hands. I declare, I am just as if I had a broken back! And so you tempt Petter, too? For such rubbish you can throw away your money—you never try to save. Or, you do not mean to say that you got those papers for nothing?"

As the blacksmith could not assert this, she began to give one shrill cry after the other, now and then interrupted by the asseveration that he was just fit to be a miserable dolt of a school-master. Her husband sat still and quiet under all this, for long expe-

rience had taught him that she would not become calm until she had screamed herself tired.

In the meantime no one noticed that a young man, who was walking along the road, now directed his steps towards the forge, just as the daughter Else came running up from the field, where she had been busy planting potatoes.

"And is a school-master then something so miserable, Mother Friberg?" said the young man, who now with a certain hesitation stood still at the door. The one who asked this question, was no more and no less than the new school-master of the village, whom Else was on the point of running over.

"I really believed that something wrong was going on here, and that some one had been beaten to death, else I certainly would not have come."

Mother Friberg assured him that she was very much ashamed, and that she was ready to sink through the earth, but she had such an awful pain in her back; after which the scene ended quite peaceably. The school-master exchanged a few words with the black smith, who declared that all this did not signify much, and that mother did not mean so ill; although she was a little hasty sometimes, she certainly had reason for it, as he perhaps spent too much time reading—and then the young man took his departure, while he

begged Else's pardon, in case he had trodden on her toes.

Mother Friberg, however, who did not find her neighbor in, had returned home as quick as she could, and, warm and heated, she probably took cold, for the following day she had an attack of rheumatism.

Several of her pious sisters asserted, that Satan had got into her, and tried by sending up prayers, falling on their knees and the laying on of hands, to drive him out of her body; but as he then seemed to possess her still worse, the blacksmith meddled in the affair and declared, that the aches were rheumatic, and relieved them gradually with warm applications and by rubbing her with whiskey and salt. When the wife, somewhat recovered and well bound up, could again sit in the stuffed easy-chair, she said to her husband:

"Never would I have believed that you were such a good hand!"

"It is my reading you have to thank."

Mother Friberg shook her head; that was a thing which she never could approve of.

But when the school-master from that time often peeped into the forge and found himself entertained with talking to the old man, it seemed to her that it might be a good thing after all that father knew something; and when in addition to this, the young man

both noticed and spoke to her Else as well as one fine day proposed to her, saying: "It was anyway a blessed moment, when I for the first time entered this house!" Mother Friberg thought so too.

"Yes, if I had not read, you would not have screamed," said the blacksmith, laughing: "and then that fine young fellow might never have set his foot here. He is a good man, who knows something."

"And has something," thought she.

"You must admit, that reading is of some benefit after all."

Mother Friberg was obliged at last to acknowledge this.

"If you would also read 'The Lost Sheep,' I would have nothing to say," said she.

But he could not be persuaded to do that, and so the matter yet stands to-day.

THE FIFTH WHEEL UNDER THE WAGON.

"YOU are always in the way," growled the forester, as he in the twilight came near stumbling over the little chubby Anna, who sat playing by the door.

"Don't sit right in the door," added the forester's wife; "can you not play with the boys? they are never in the way."

Anna got up obediently and approached the four boys, who in a corner of the cabin were engaged in making a little cart.

"Don't tread on my knife!" cried Nils, the eldest, and Anna drew back, frightened.

"Well, well, you needn't tumble over me," burst out Matts, provoked.

"Girls always go as if they were blind," muttered Carl, with a glance at little Anna, who quite distressed, did not know what to do, so as not to be in

the way. She put her hands behind her, dropped her head on her breast, and sighed deeply.

"Is the fourth wheel most done, Carl?" asked Nils.

"Directly," was the answer. "See here, now we will fasten it to the axle—there! Do you know, boys, it is going to be scrumptious!"

Little Anna bent down to also see the scrumptious cart, but in doing so she happened to upset a meal-bag that stood on the bench by her.

"Are you at it again?" scolded her mother; "you do nothing but mischief."

The little girl stole quietly and cautiously into the darkest corner behind Carl, and seated herself in silence on the floor.

"Anna, you are just like the fifth wheel under the wagon," said Matts, as he fastened the axle to the cart, "see, here is the fourth wheel; but if I now put a fifth one there, it would all the time be in the way. Do you understand?"

"Yes," answered Anna meekly, and again sighed. After a while she asked: "why am I then the fifth wheel?"

"Because you are the fifth in order," replied Nils.

"Oh no, it is because you are a girl," said Matts, mockingly.

"No, it is because she has red hair," declared Carl.

"It is all that together," said Hans, maliciously and then he squinted his eyes in such an ugly way.

Little Anna sighed still more deeply; it seemed to her that it was very lamentable to have red hair, to be a girl and to have four older brothers, so that one was just the fifth; and yet it was something that never could be helped.

The boys' cart was in the meantime finished and they ran around with it, shouting and laughing.

"It goes well," thought Anna, "and that is because it has four wheels, just as Matts said. They can run, and they don't do any harm and are not in the way like me; but it is certainly because they are not the fifth wheel, as I am." And Anna silently wiped away a tear that rose to her eyes; she would have so liked to run with the cart like the boys, but then she would decidedly have been in somebody's way again.

So Anna sat still and looked at the sport until she fell asleep. When they were all about to go to bed, the little girl was missing: "Anna, Anna!" they cried.

"There she sits in the corner, mother," said Hans.

"Oh, the naughty girl! How will we get her awake again?" and the mother shook the little slumberer violently. "Stand up, Anna, I can't carry you to your bed."

Anna opened her eyes half way and whispered unconsciously: "The fifth wheel!" Her mother lifted her up from the floor and carried her to the hard bed.

The sun shone bright and clear between the trees when Anna awoke the following morning. She felt pleased and happy over it, for it had rained several days and she had been shut up in the small, dark cabin.

"Well, Anna, get up," cried the forester, "the boys are coming with the water-pail, and then they will fall over you."

Anna hurried up and pushed the straw bed under the bench as she knew that she ought to. Then she went out to wash herself at the brook. A merry song trembled on her lips, as she sprang to the door, but as ill-luck would have it, Matts and Nils stood outside with the pail of water; the door knocked against Matts, who stumbled and spilt the water over himself and Nils and the entry floor. Anna stood mute with crossed hands.

"It is as I said, you are the fifth wheel under the wagon," said Matts angrily, shaking the water out of his jacket. Their mother was annoyed; she was tired and sick and did not wish to wait,—the boys must immediately go back for more water. "You should

look before you," said she to the little girl, " and not always be in the way."

Anna went out; all her joy was gone; she did not remember the song, and the sun disappeared behind a great cloud. The forester's wife had long been ailing; she now became seriously ill, and was obliged to keep her bed; she had fever and ague. The forester was away most of the time, and when he came home, everything was in disorder, the meals were poor, and often not ready, the boys did not know how to keep house, and Anna was only five years old.

Early one morning Anna awoke and lay quite still and quiet a while. The boys were all asleep, but the forester's bed was empty. The door of the little chamber next to the large room opened and the father came in. When he saw that Anna was awake he said: " Come here and see something."

Anna sprang up and approached the door on tiptoe. Her father led her to a cradle, the same cradle in which Anna used to sleep. What! a little tiny face lay on the pillow and a pair of small hands, small as a kitten's paws, rested on the coverlid. Anna stood amazed, and looked now at the cradle, now at her mother, who said kindly: " It is a little sister for you."

Anna's first thought was: whether she could still

be called "the fifth wheel," or whether it helped matters that they were now six. Yes, it would surely be better; she was no longer the only girl, and think how nice the little one was; perhaps she was called Anna too?

It really seemed for a time as though Anna had not been in the way. The forester had profitable employment and was in a good humor. His wife had so much to do with the little one, and besides she was now well again, for Nils had been to the country-seat for some drops. But one day it happened that Anna was again reminded of "the fifth wheel." Her mother had a great "cleaning up," and Anna was told to rock the cradle. But the baby did not wish to go to sleep at all, and cried so hard that the mother finally had to come herself.

"You are not good for anything," said she to Anna, "now go and get some wood instead."

Anna did so. When she came back with her heavy load, she hurried to the fire-place and did not notice a kettle of hot water that stood in the middle of the floor. She fell and burned her hands right badly, dropping the wood besides on the freshly-scoured floor.

"There is nothing else for me to do," thought Anna, "but to run away;" and when the baby fell asleep and her mother lay down on the bed to rest a

while after her heavy work, Anna took her handkerchief, tied it on her little red head, and stole softly out in the yard. The gate was open, her father and brothers were gone; Anna went to the woods. The firs and pines sighed seriously, and Anna felt very strangely. She tripped lightly along the narrow path and clear tears dropped down in the flower-cups, which then shone still more beautiful in the sunlight.

By-and-by it began to grow dark, and Anna's little feet became tired. Where did she intend to go? She did not know herself. Away, away, that was the main thing. She now sat down in the soft green grass. A little bird at that instant flew to its nest in the large birch. The child saw how the bird spread its warm wings over the young ones, and Anna leaned her weary head against the turf; she fancied that the birds' wings were also spread over her. Poor Anna!

Now a rustling was heard in the woods and heavy steps advanced to the place where little Anna slumbered. A large man with a black face appeared among the trees and remained standing before the child.

"Coals and brands! What does this mean?" exclaimed he, astonished. "Isn't it the forester's Anna? Why—so it is. What brings the child here

this time of day, in the deep woods? Coals and brands! Anna! Anna!"

The little girl started and gave a cry of terror when she saw the black face leaning over her.

"Don't be afraid, little one," consoled the man; "it is only the collier; do you not remember how white I am on Sundays?"

Anna smiled; she was now thoroughly awake. The collier lifted the little form in his strong arms.

"What were you doing here, Anna?"

Anna sighed. "I intended to run away."

"Where to?"

"I do not know."

"And you intended to sleep here in the woods among the wolves?"

"Yes."

"Why did you not stay at home in the cabin?"

"Ah, there I am like the fifth wheel under the wagon, they say," answered Anna, sobbing.

The good-hearted collier passed his broad hand over his sooty face: "Coals and brands!" muttered he.

"Come with me," said he, "I will go home with you."

"No, no! then I will get scolded," exclaimed Anna, twining her arms around her friend's neck.

"You be quiet, I will tell them that they mustn't scold my god-daughter. There now, sleep away, birdling."

Little Anna leaned her head trustingly against the collier's broad shoulder and soon slept as sound as if she had been at home. In the meantime the forester's family had wondered what had become of Anna, and finally prepared to go and search for her in the woods. They were much surprised to meet the collier at the door with the one they missed. The collier laid the sleeping child gently on the bed and then turned to the others.

"Coals and brands, what folks you are!" growled he. "The child goes alone in the woods and you know nothing about it. Do you see the tears in the girl's eyes? She has cried because no one cared for her. Fifth wheel under the wagon! Coals and brands! I declare if I can tell what good it does to say such words to the child!"

The forester did not know whether to be disconcerted or angry; his wife fussed with her apron; Matts bit his nails and Hans squinted his eyes; Nils kept silent, but Carl whispered contemptuously: "Shame on her!"

The collier continued: "She is my god-daughter: we have no children; let the girl stay with us for a

time, then my wife will have something to amuse herself with. Well—?" asked he, as the forester stood irresolute.

"So be it," said the forester, finally.

"Good, to-morrow I will come for her."

"My wife will be so glad, when she gets a little girl," said the collier, as he the next day walked through the woods, holding Anna by the hand.

"And mamma has Eva," said Anna, smoothing her clean apron.

"Yes. Will you also like us, little one?"

Anna looked up with a beaming smile: "Oh, so much!"

The collier's old cabin could already be seen, with its small windows and crooked stoop. The mistress of the house sat inside, spinning. Anna took a firmer hold of the rough hand that held hers.

"Good-day, my little girl, welcome!" cried the collier's wife.

Anna's shyness disappeared before the friendly voice and the hearty words. She sprang forward and reached out both hands in greeting.

"God bless you!" said the collier's wife, patting the little girl's head. "Come in. See, here is your bed, and here is a stool that you may have for your

own, and here in the corner you may keep your doll. Now run and look around a little."

Anna tripped busily about, looked at everything, but did not touch anything. The black cat with the round green eyes became her friend immediately, and she fed the hens and chickens. Anna was also allowed to help the collier's wife to strew juniper on the floor, wash the spoons and pick up chips, and believed that she was very useful, which made her cheerful and happy. Every day when the collier came home, Anna ran to meet him, put her little hand in his and skipped beside him way to the stoop. Sometimes she went with him to the charcoal-kiln in the woods,—that was an especial treat. Then she picked flowers and berries and ate out of the lunch-basket, and it seemed to her that things tasted better than they did in the cabin at the table. When they returned in the evening the collier used to carry her, and it frequently happened that Anna fell asleep before they reached home.

Ten years had "burned out," as the collier used to say. Little Anna had grown up into a good and capable girl between fifteen and sixteen. The collier's wife had not wished to let her go, after she had once got her. At first Anna was to remain only a few

weeks, then a few months, and finally it was quite natural that she should stay altogether; she was like their own child. But now her father and mother had become old. Nils and Matts were in service, Carl and Hans had both fallen sick with the small-pox, and little Eva was still a child.

"I am now needed at home," said Anna. "Good-by, dear mother! You can do without me. Isn't that right?"

"Yes, indeed, God bless you, child. Have patience and forget that which was."

"I will. Thank you, mother! Thank you, godfather."

"Wait a bit," said the collier, "I am going with you."

Anna hastened down the narrow path; she was so light-hearted and happy, quite different from what she was as a child. The old collier came slowly after.

"Like a lark, like a lark! Coals and brands!" said he, smiling. "I declare this is not much like the former, silent, troubled Anna; but you see my good wife is also a crown among women, as you well know."

At the gate the collier reached out his hand; Anna seized it and kissed it. "Thanks, thanks for everything!" said she with emotion, and hastened in. "Good-day, father, good-day, mother! Here I am;

I ought certainly to be at home and attend to my sick brothers, as Eva is so little and mother is old."

And then she began to fix up the room. It went like a dance, and now she was no longer in the way. Anna was everywhere, with the sick, in the cabin, at the well, in the woods, in the store-room, all over, and her mother was only allowed to sit and knit. And if Eva was sometimes in the way, Anna patted her on the head and said kindly: "Step a little aside, my pet."

Hans forgot to squint and Carl to mock. The father and mother blessed the good kind girl. Sometimes when the old folks began: "We were certainly hard to you before!" Anna smiled so sweetly and said: "Dear father, dear mother, that is all forgotten long ago, and it is quite likely that I was often in the way. Here, Carl, is a mug of fresh water. Hans, wait, I will shake up your pillow. There!" And the next instant Anna was away again. They heard her fresh, glad song outside.

AN OLD-FASHIONED HOUSE.

ONE who has made himself acquainted with the mode of life of our people in old times, will probably remember, that the style of building was very simple, and that the interior of the abodes and the furniture were of the most primitive character.

The picture represents an old log-house that was still standing in the year 1840. It was situated on the western slope of a mountain, extremely picturesque with its farms and groves, and which descended gently to the Fidan river.

The cabin in question was built of some few timbers to the height of about five feet, and had a high roof, whose whole under part, with its huge rafters, was seen inside, and gave the mistress of the house no little trouble, when it had to be scoured, which was done at least at mid-summer and Christmas. The windows were small and the panes pretty numerous,

consequently they were only two or three inches square. The window in the roof let in the principal light and was thus highly necessary, although it brought many discomforts with it in bad weather, for when it rained, it leaked, and when it snowed, it had to be swept off.

As you entered, you had at the right a fireplace of the large dimensions of former days, and before this, along the wall, went a bench, consisting of a rough, square beam, which had never been exposed to the plane, but which had experienced the whisk with sand and water, so that it was smooth as the polished leaf of a table, although knotty just as the axe had left it. At the left side was a single seat, and in front of this a so-called "standing-bed," a sort of combination affair, which folded up in the day-time and contained clothes-press, shelves and settee, all in one. In the middle of the floor stood a table, six feet long and four feet broad, but rounded at the corners. It had four clumsy wooden legs, each certainly nine inches square. This was also scoured white, and looked smooth and shining, although it was probably over a hundred years old.

Who lived in this old-fashioned home? There lived "Laggakatrina," an old witch, who derived her name from her father's place: Laggare-farm. The appella-

tion of witch, which she had obtained on account of her occupation of curing both men and women and animals, made one rather disinclined to approach her, especially for the first time. Children felt this dread most of all, for with them imagination conjures up wonderful things. Nevertheless I was often with "Laggakatrina," for many had messages to send to her, and I was solicited by the neighbors to take them, and I finally found her to be very kind-hearted and nice. But the old woman had a very singular ap pearance; she was a relic from olden times, and in her attire, &c., she was from still more ancient times than her age indicated; and through this, together with her calm and measured way of conducting herself, she inspired more and more respect as you became acquainted with her, while at the same time her always friendly speech, and above all her mild, yet penetrating glance, with which she as good as looked right through the soul of her neighbor, made you feel drawn to her, although you could not avoid feeling a superstitious fear.

"Laggakatrina" was the physician of the peasantry in the district, and also its *vétérinaire*. For old and young, for sheep or cows, she knew a remedy. When she was consulted about sick persons she always required some article of their clothing, especially an

under-garment. This she examined very closely, and then she generally sent a powder to the patient. She frequently said, after her eyes had surveyed the garment brought to her: "Something bad is the matter with this."

If she was sought for animals, some of the hair or wool of the sick creatures had to be shown her, and after giving it the most careful scrutiny, she gave a powder for the animal to take. These powders, which were of different colors, often had a strong odor, and were evidently composed of herbs; other powders lacked odor. Sometimes, after she had regarded that which was shown to her, she went out in the entry, and she could be heard rubbing on some object, as if scraping off something.

Her cures often did service. Be this as it may, although it is to be supposed, that in the majority of cases, nature worked without her intervention; but true it is, that many simple cures were known by the old people, who had studied in Nature's book and bequeathed their knowledge hundreds of years through to their children and descendants.

THE THREE SISTERS; OR, THE ANT AND THE SPIDER.

THERE was once a poor woman, who had three daughters: Bibbi, Mimmi and Lilli. They were all pretty and good little girls, who were very fond of their mother and of each other; but yet the two eldest caused the old mother much anxiety, for they lacked all inclination for work, and were never willing to help her to gain anything for their life support. In one word, they were down right lazy.

The whole day Bibbi only wished to sing, dance and amuse herself, and she could never keep or take care of anything, but whatever she got in her hands she ate up or destroyed immediately. If she had a new dress, she put it on right away; if any of her acquaintances gave her a basket of fruit or a jar of honey, she could not leave it until it was all eaten up, although with wise management it might have lasted a whole week.

Mimmi, to be sure, was careful of her things and saving, but on the other hand sluggish and indifferent; yes, so thoroughly lazy, that she didn't even care to play or amuse herself.

In the winter she liked to sit by the fire, with her hands in her lap, and warm herself, and in the summer she stretched herself out in the shadow of the large maple that stood in the yard. In the winter she thought it too cold, and in the summer too warm, to work.

The youngest daughter, Lilli, on the contrary, occasioned her mother much joy and was to her a faithful aid. Early in the morning she was seen at the spinning-wheel or at the loom. In summer she attended to their little garden-patch, fed the hens and chickens, sheared and looked after the sheep, went to town and sold eggs, and the cloth she had herself woven; in short, she was unwearied in industry and forethought. The mother exhorted her eldest daughters to follow Lilli's example; but it was to speak to deaf ears. Bibbi had no time, except for play and pranks, and Mimmi couldn't.

Then it once happened, towards spring, that the mother became very ill. All three daughters were deeply troubled. Bibbi and Mimmi overcame their laziness in the beginning, and helped Lilli to take

care of their mother, but as the illness lasted several weeks, their zeal soon came to an end. Mimmi was not able, and Bibbi could not stand it to sit still and quiet by the bedside all day long; it was simply impossible. Thus Lilli, who had all the work in the house, was also obliged to take care of her sick mother almost alone.

The old woman knew that she would not live long and thought of her daughters with extreme anxiety.

"Poor Lilli!" thought the mother, "she has to attend to everything herself and provide for her sisters. She cannot hold out long, and when she is dead, too, what will become of the two others! The little place I leave them will be neglected, and they will finally have to starve to death, or else go and beg, unless a miracle changes their dispositions."

Just as she lay and worried about this, the door opened and an old woman clad in rags hobbled in, leaning on a crutch.

"God's peace, good friends!" greeted she, "I am old, hungry, cold and tired, and beg you to let me rest awhile by your fire. If you will give me a little something to eat besides, I will do you a good deed."

"Certainly, my good mother," answered the sick woman; "draw up a chair by the fire, girls!"

Bibbi stood before a little looking-glass, adorning

her hair with a wreath of blue-bells; she had no time to draw up any chair for an old woman. Mimmi, who sat warming herself, intended to get up and offer her her seat, but before she was ready, Lilli had pushed aside her spinning-wheel, placed a chair before the fire and helped the trembling old woman to seat herself.

"Now, girls!" said their mother, "see what you have to offer our guest to eat. You, Mimmi, were to go and fish in the brook yesterday; if you got any small fishes they are soon cooked."

"No, mamma," answered Mimmi, carelessly, "I hadn't any worms to bait my hook with, and it was tiresome to go and hunt for some."

"But you, Bibbi," continued the mother, "you received a pint of honey yesterday from the neighbor's daughter; take out a little to spread on a piece of bread for this good woman."

"Dear mamma," answered Bibbi, blushing, "it is all gone."

In the meantime Lilli had been occupied in the kitchen, and now came in with a slice of bread and a plate-full of lobster.

"There," said she pleasantly, "now eat, my good old woman! I caught the lobsters last night, and am glad I had them to treat you to."

Then she went for some apples, which she had kept since last year's harvest, and laid them on the hearth to bake.

"And you, girls," said the mother to her oldest daughters, "haven't you any apples left?"

"Oh no!" answered both.

"Mine," continued Mimmi, "have become frozen and spoiled. I put them in the garret last fall, and afterwards I didn't think to take them down."

"And I ate mine up long ago," said Bibbi.

"Ah yes!" sighed the mother to herself, "it is always so. Lilli alone has forethought. What will become of them when I lie in the grave!"

When the old woman had eaten, Lilli took a pillow, laid it on the sofa and bade her to rest herself.

"I will go out and take a look at the lambs," said she.

"And I," joined in Bibbi, "will see whether the redstart has laid any eggs yet in the pear-tree, and then I will hunt for anemones."

"You, Mimmi," said the mother, "go with Lilli and help her, then it will be perfectly quiet in here."

Mimmi rose slowly and thought: "I do not make much noise!" Still she had to obey, and went out; but Lilli certainly did not have any assistance from

her. She only stood and looked at her sister, as she carried water and leaves to the sheepfold.

In the meantime the old woman and their mother were alone in the room.

"My good friend," said the old woman, "I thank you for the hospitality you have shown me, and would like to reward it, if I only could."

"Ah," sighed the patient, "I do not need much more in this world, I feel the approach of death. But my poor children! For them is my heart troubled."

"You have pretty and nice children," said the old woman.

"Yes, God be praised!" answered the mother, "they are neither deformed nor bad, but—"

"I understand what you mean," interrupted the old woman. "You are concerned about their future, and it pains you that Lilli shall be obliged to bear all the exertion. I have seen enough of them to know the disposition of each, and your apprehensions seem perfectly natural. But, my good woman, I promise to assume the charge of your daughters, to become their friend and support, and not to spare any efforts tc induce Bibbi and Mimmi to correct their faults."

"I thank you for your good will," answered the sick woman, surprised, "but I fear that you cannot do much for them. '

The old woman smiled.

"I suppose you think I look too miserable for that," said she, "but one mustn't always judge by appearances. Now look at me and say, whether you consider my friendship of any value to your children?"

With these words she approached the bed where the sick woman lay and touched her eyes softly.

When the amazed woman looked up, the old beggar had disappeared, and in her stead a young, beautiful lady stood there, with a crown of jewels in her black hair. Her dress was of light blue satin with silver stars, and in her hand she held a little wand of gold, instead of the rude crutch, by means of which she had dragged herself along.

Delighted and astonished the sick woman would have risen and thrown herself at the beautiful lady's feet, but the latter hindered her and said:

"Be still, good woman! I am the fairy Titi, and have come here to comfort you and promise you not to abandon your daughters. I have always loved you and Lilli, for I like good and industrious human beings, such as you two, and visit them very often. For your sake I will also occupy myself with Mimmi and Bibbi. Now be calm! I promise to take care of all three of your daughters, and am convinced that I will eventually succeed in bringing the two

thoughtless sisters to a different and better state of mind. But I enjoin it upon you to strictly conceal from your children who I am, and let them consider me what I seem to them to be. I hear the girls coming, give me your hand in token that you will conscientiously keep silent about what you have seen."

The mother gave her promise, the girls came in, and at the same instant Titi was again transformed into an old, ugly and ragged beggar.

"It is well that you are back already," said she to the sisters. "I have still a long way to walk this evening and would like to thank you for the rest and refreshment you have afforded me. I have here a little gift for you, which may seem slight, but a poor, indigent wayfarer cannot give great presents, and if you make the right use of it, you can have both benefit and pleasure from it."

With these words she took a handful of walnuts from her dirty pocket, gave three of them to each of the girls and continued:

"If you plant these nuts in the garden and take good care of the slips that spring up from them, then they will in a short time become large, beautiful trees, from which you can pick superb walnuts. But spare no pains and attend to them well."

The girls thanked her, and the old woman directly afterwards left their little cottage.

That very afternoon Lilli went out in the garden with a spade, dug and manured the soil well, planted her three walnuts and watered them.

"It is time enough to-morrow," said Mimmi, "I can't do it to-day," and with this she put them in a table drawer.

Bibbi looked at hers, rattled them in her hand and wondered how they would taste.

"Ah," said she, after a little hesitation, "one I can certainly eat up. I have two left anyway, and two large trees are a full plenty. I will plant them by and by, when I get time."

So she took a stone, cracked the nut and ate it. But it tasted so good, that it seemed to her one tree was sufficient, and consequently she ate up another, and ere many minutes all three walnuts were gone. When she now reflected, that she had none left to plant, she was at first both sorry and ashamed, but soon consoled herself with the conviction, that Lilli would surely give her one of her three trees.

Mimmi's nuts remained in the drawer, and every day she said: "To-morrow I will plant them!" until they were entirely decayed and spoiled, then she con-

soled herself in the same way as Bibbi, with the hope that Lilli would share with her.

Shortly after Titi's visit the sick mother died. Her daughters mourned her bitterly, and for a time Bibbi and Mimmi were quite changed. They remembered her injunctions and helped Lilli as well as they could, but it did not last long, they gradually resumed their old habits, and poor Lilli again had to do the work alone and provide for all.

Meanwhile three dark green slips came up from the walnuts Lilli planted, and these slips grew with astonishing rapidity, gained branches and twigs, and when the autumn came, they were already pretty large trees, full of beautiful, ripe walnuts.

Then Lilli picked a basket of nuts one day, put them in the shadow of the tree, asked her sisters to sit down beside her, and invited them to eat with her. The two elder ones were now ashamed, and Bibbi said:

"You see, Mimmi, nine such pretty trees might now have stood in the garden and we could have had some to offer Lilli, if we had not been so inconsiderate and lazy. I am sorry that I so thoughtlessly ate up my nuts."

"Yes," replied Mimmi, "and I am sorry that I

let mine lie and spoil. Mamma was right, when she said that Lilli was the only sensible one of us all."

"Don't be sorry, dear sisters," said the good-hearted Lilli. "Here stand three trees; we are also three. Let us each take one. See, how the branches bend under the fruit. One tree is more than I need."

Bibbi and Mimmi fell on Lilli's neck and thanked her; then, happy and contented, they began to crack one nut after the other, when the garden-gate opened and the old beggar-woman came towards them, panting, and all out of breath. Lilli sprang up directly, took her by the hand and asked her to sit down.

"I am glad," said Lilli, "that you have come here again, so that I can thank you right heartily for your gift. See what splendid trees now stand here, with such good nuts! They are your gift. Now you must also give me the joy of having you stay with us a few days and make the best of what we can offer you."

"It is well, right well, that you are pleased with my little gift," answered the old woman; "but," continued she, "here are only your three trees. Haven't your sisters any, they too?"

When she asked this question, the old woman looked sharply at Mimmi and Bibbi, who blushed,

dropped their eyes in confusion and said nothing. It pained Lilli to see her sisters so disconcerted, and she answered evasively:

"Yes, good mother, we have one each."

"That may all be," said the old woman, "but then I suppose your two sisters got their trees from you. Is it not so?"

Lilli remained silent, but Mimmi and Bibbi, who in spite of their faults were good, honest girls, and never spoke an untruth, answered both at once:

"Yes, you are right! Lilli gave us each one."

"I might have known it!" burst out the old woman, drawing her gray, bushy eyebrows together with so fierce an expression, that the girls became quite downhearted; "I might have known it! But how comes it then, that no tree has grown up for you? What have you done with your nuts?"

"I wished to know how they tasted," said Bibbi, ashamed and afraid; "they were real good, and so I ate up all three of them."

"And I," stammered Mimmi, "neglected to plant mine, until they were spoiled and good for nothing."

"Heedless girls!" said the old woman in a stern voice, and straightened up her bent figure, so that she looked as tall again as before; "heedless girls! your mother had good cause to be anxious on your account

You are not willing to work yourselves, but are not ashamed to enjoy the fruits of your younger sister's efforts and care. I promised your mother on her death-bed not to abandon you, and therefore I am now here, in order to warn you and try to induce you to lay aside your thoughtlessness and laziness, and instead faithfully assist your sister, who *ought* not to work alone for you all, and *cannot* hold out for any length of time. This time I warn you and will defer any punishment; but if my warning does not serve, I will come back again, and then you will have to repent bitterly, that you did not obey the ragged old woman, who perhaps possesses greater power over you than you suppose, miserable as she looks. I mean to try you once more. Here is an orange for each of you. If you plant them and take good care of the trees which grow up from them, they will next fall bear sweet, juicy oranges in abundance.

"You, Lilli, I need not admonish to water and attend to your tree well, but I strictly forbid you to busy yourself in the least with your sisters'. If you break this command, it will go ill for all three of you. It is each one's duty to take care of her own tree.

"Good-bye! next summer you will see me again. I will then see whether you have neglected my warn

ing or not, but I have reason to doubt that I will find more than a single tree to delight my eyes."

With these words the old woman left the garden, and soon disappeared from the sight of the amazed girls. They stood silent a long time and looked at their oranges, which shone like gold balls in their hands and smelt so good. Finally Lilli said:

"My beloved sisters! We see how the little gift I received last spring from the strange old woman has been blessed and increased a hundred fold. It will undoubtedly go the same way with the oranges, which look still more beautiful and delicious. Let us therefore obey her faithfully, so that she may not become angry. It is evident that she wishes us well, and we ought not to be ungrateful. Let us now hasten to select a suitable place to plant them in, and with cheerful minds and diligence begin the work."

This time Bibbi and Mimmi obeyed their sister without objection, for the ragged, decrepit old woman had really frightened them. It is true it seemed to Mimmi that the work was unbearably tiresome before it was half done, and Bibbi thought it was dreadfully tedious; but then they fancied they saw the old woman standing threatening and stern at the garden-gate, and so they grasped the spade and rake again with zeal, and scarcely looked up until it was all thoroughly

accomplished. In a few days the plants were already up, and grew so finely that it was a pleasure and delight to behold.

In the beginning Mimmi and Bibbi watered their plants and cleared away the weeds pretty thoroughly, but in a few weeks their thoughtlessness and laziness again took the upperhand; they did not care to trouble themselves with trees, forgot them, and when Lilli anxiously reminded them of it, they declared that the trees no longer needed any care, they might attend to themselves. Yes, they even began to make fun of her dread and obedience of the old woman, and often said:

"What harm can an old beggar-woman do us?"

Lilli shook her head, and asserted that there must be something wonderful with the old woman which they did not understand; it was shown by her gifts, for never had one seen trees grow so fast and bear fruit within a year; but the two incorrigible girls only laughed at her, paid no heed to her anxious warnings, and fell back into their own useless and unrestrained way of life.

Lilli, on the contrary, continued to attend carefully to her tree. She would gladly have taken the same pains with her sisters', but she dared not infringe the old woman's threatening command. Before winter

came, the tree was four feet high, with a little luxuriant crown.

One day it occurred to Bibbi and Mimmi to see how much their trees had grown since they last saw them; and with dismay they found the two trees dried up for want of water, and overgrown with weeds.

At first they were both troubled and frightened, but soon cheered each other up with the assurance that the old woman had no power to punish them, and that the good Lilli's tree would certainly bear enough fruit for them all; after which Mimmi, quite unconcerned, lay down under one of the walnut trees to doze, and Bibbi ran to play and catch butterflies, forgetting both fear and regret.

The winter came, and everything went as it was accustomed to; that is to say, Lilli worked, and her two sisters did nothing.

By and by spring gradually approached, the snow melted away, the ground was covered with flowers and grass, and Lilli's four trees already had green tops. Lilli was uneasy; she thought of the old woman's words: "Next summer you will see me again!" and she feared for what would then happen to her sisters. But Mimmi and Bibbi were free from all apprehension; they seemed to have forgotten the old woman's existence.

But the old woman had not forgotten them. It was now full summer, the sisters had just risen from the breakfast-table and prepared to employ the beautiful day each in her own way; Lilli in work, Mimmi in rest, and Bibbi in pleasure. Then the old woman unexpectedly stood in their midst. Her aspect was menacing and angry.

"I come," said she, "to see how you have obeyed my injunctions. As I foresaw, they have been fruitless. Only one orange tree stands in the garden; it is Lilli's. Bibbi and Mimmi, where are yours?"

Often had Bibbi and Mimmi laughed at their former dread of the old woman, but now they had no desire to laugh, now their courage was all gone, and they stood trembling and timorous.

"My good mother," they stammered, "we planted our oranges as you ordered; little trees came up, but they withered and died."

"And why didn't Lilli's tree wither and die too? You do not answer me. Did you give the tender plants water, when the sun's hot rays dried the earth? Did you pull up the weeds that tried to choke them?"

"At first we did, then we thought it wasn't necessary."

"Yes," said the old woman, and her eyes flashed; "at first you exerted yourselves, but afterwards it

became too tedious, too troublesome. Ah! you lazy, good-for-nothing girls, who will not improve, either by your sister's example or my warnings; the time has now come when you will have to repent! Do you imagine that I will allow Lilli to toil day and night, and destroy her health and strength in order that you may spend your days in idleness and play? That would be to poorly keep the promise I gave your mother. Not an hour longer shall you be a burden to Lilli. *Me* shall you follow, and *I* will teach you to obey and work."

"Ah, my good mother!" said Lilli, weeping, "leave my sisters with me! Believe me, I will gladly work for them, and I am sure that they will help me hereafter."

"Yes, that we will, that we will!" exclaimed Bibbi and Mimmi at once. "We will obey Lilli in everything, and do what she wishes us to."

"It is too late," answered the old woman; "and I know that you would not keep your word. Do not cry, Lilli! I have something to say to you in private, my child; go therefore out in the yard, Bibbi and Mimmi, and wait for me there."

The terrified girls obeyed, without saying a word.

"Don't cry, dear Lilli!" said the old woman once more, when the door was closed after the two girls;

"it is for your sisters' good that I now separate them from you. I promise to sometime bring them back here as nice and diligent as you are, my child, and then you will pass your days together in undisturbed happiness and joy. Continue to be industrious, contented and good; attend to your trees and your whole little place; all your work shall be blessed in rich measure, and time shall pass quickly and lightly, although you are alone. Look at me and say, whether you believe me able to fulfil my promise?"

With these words she raised her crutch and touched Lilli with it. The old woman had disappeared, and the fairy Titi, in all her beauty and splendor, stood smiling before the amazed girl.

"Give me your hand, dear Lilli," said she. "You are not afraid of me now, and not afraid to confide your sisters to my care! My desire is only to see you all happy and good. Farewell, my child! Remain always the same, and be assured that the fairy Titi watches over your welfare."

She embraced Lilli, resumed the old woman's form and went out to Bibbi and Mimmi, who had felt a great desire to run away and hide themselves, but were restrained by an inexplicable fear.

"Follow me!" said the old woman in a short tone; and the girls obeyed without demur, although they

thought she had no right to command them. But it was impossible for them not to obey, and they were so distressed and alarmed, that they were not able to utter a single word.

The old woman walked with rapid steps to a little pasture which adjoined the place. To the girls' extreme surprise she now seemed to be as strong and active as she had before been weak and decrepit. When they came to a large oak, that leaned its branches towards an old stone wall, she stopped.

"I am tired," said she, "and wish to rest here. Lie down beside me on the grass a while."

The girls did so, and scarcely had they touched the ground, before they fell into a heavy slumber. When they again awoke and looked around them, they were as astonished as they were frightened, for everything was entirely strange to them. The pasture, oak tree and their little cottage, were gone.

They found themselves on the grass before an old dilapidated cabin, which stood wedged in between high steep rocks. Prickly bushes grew on the sides of the rocks and in the crevices, where some scraggy goats were grazing. At one side was a large uncultivated field, and right before them a lake. Not a human being was to be seen; even the old woman had vanished.

"Ah! where are we, where are we!" burst out the unhappy girls. "How did we get here? Where is our home? Where is Lilli?"

Inconsolable, they embraced each other and wept aloud.

At length Bibbi said:

"Come, Mimmi, let us hurry away from here, before the wicked old woman returns. If we have come here from our home, we can certainly find our way back. Come, Mimmi!"

"Oh yes! let us go!" answered Mimmi, and arm in arm they now ran across the field, forced their way through the bushes and climbed the rocks; but no path did they find, and when they at last, with much effort, had got up on one of the highest rocks, they saw with affright that they were surrounded by water on all sides; they were on an island.

"There must be a boat here somewhere! Let us look for a boat," said Mimmi.

They went round and round the island, but no boat was to be found; and tired out, hungry and troubled, they returned to the cabin.

"Oh! I am so hungry!" said Bibbi. "Let us see if there isn't some one in the cabin, who will take pity on us and give us a piece of bread."

The door was fastened. She knocked, but no one

answered. She went to the window and peeped in; not a living creature was to be seen there except a large gray cat, which lay sleeping on the hearth. It was late, the last edge of the sun just then disappeared behind the woods on the other side of the lake. Bibbi stepped back, hopeless, to her sister.

"Mimmi," lamented she, "we must die here, on this horrible island, die of hunger in the wilderness. And the old woman, where has she gone? Dreadful as she is, I would still be glad to see her now."

"Ah yes!" sobbed Mimmi, "so would I! Why does she leave us to perish here, the unmerciful old woman!"

Scarcely had they uttered these words, before they heard the sound of a crutch on the rocks, and the old woman came trudging down with a pail in her hand.

"Good-evening, girls," said she, in a tolerably friendly tone, "are you awake now? I have milked my goats, to give us something for supper. Now come in; we will eat and then go to rest."

She put a large rusty key in the door, opened it and stepped in, accompanied by the two sisters. Then the cat rose, came towards the old woman and rubbed itself against her feet.

"Oh, pussy," said she, "have you expected me? Here is your share."

She gave the cat a saucer of milk, poured the rest into a bowl, put it on the table, took some bread, a piece of cheese and a plate of nuts from the cupboard, then seated herself at the table and invited the girls to take their places beside her.

While Bibbi and Mimmi were partaking of the frugal repast with a good appetite, they took courage and looked around the room, which was much prettier than one would have expected from the cabin's ugly and dilapidated exterior.

White curtains hung before the windows, the sofa and chairs were of stained birch, well stuffed and with handsome covering, the table of mahogany, the soft bed was provided with white, shining linen, and on a bureau with a marble top stood an elegant clock, which struck the hours.

When the meal was over, the old woman took the girls by the hand and led them into quite a small room, which lay next to her own. This, it is true, was not as pretty as the former, but exceedingly neat. The floor, chairs, table, all were white as snow. In one corner stood a large bed, with coarse, but clean sheets and a nice woollen coverlid.

"You must be tired after the unusual adventures and exertions of the day," began the old woman, "and you now need rest; but first I wish to talk to you and

let you know what you have to expect from me and what I demand of you.

"This room will be your abode, at my table shall you obtain food, and clothes from my closet. But mark well, those who stay in my house, must through work earn both clothes and food. I will not put up with laziness and carelessness. Not even my cat gets his milk without earning it; every morning I send him out to hunt, and he always brings home wild game for my dinner-table.

"I am old and sometimes need rest and help; you are young and both can and shall work. I lay it upon you to keep these two rooms in order, scoured clean and free from dust. When the weather is bad, you must spin, and when it is fine, plough up the bare field outside the cabin, and gradually make a kitchen garden of it.

"I will milk my goats myself, and gather greens among the rocks for our table, until we are able to get fresh vegetables from the field you are to cultivate. At five o'clock in the morning you must get up, and at nine in the evening go to bed. It depends upon your diligence and docility whether I now and then grant you a leisure hour to amuse yourself in. If you are willing and industrious, you shall have plenty of everything with me, and I will treat you

kindly; but laziness and obstinacy I punish severely Therefore beware how you act, if you ever wish to see your sister again and your former home. Only through obedience and zeal, through an entirely changed behavior can you attain this happiness.

'Good-night! Think of what I have said, and remember that I will keep my word."

Bibbi and Mimmi stood staring at each other a long time after the old woman left them, without being able to utter a single word. At last Mimmi burst out:

"Did you hear that, Bibbi? We are her servant-girls! The ugly old woman's servant-girls! For her we must work like slaves! It is impossible, I can't stand it, I shall die! Oh, Lilli, Lilli, where are you?"

They both continued their lamentations for quite a while, but finally they found that their resentment and grief were of no avail, and that it would be wisest to try to gain the old woman's good will, and accommodate themselves to a fate, which they at all events must acknowledge to be just and well-deserved. They resolved therefore to do their best to help and encourage each other, and then went to bed. As they were very tired they soon slept soundly.

When the old woman awoke them the next morning, she found them troubled to be sure, but tractable

When they had put the room in order and got breakfast, they went out in the field and began to dig and remove stones and roots. However hard they found the unaccustomed work, they still persevered bravely. When the old woman, at five o'clock in the afternoon, brought them their supper, she also praised their assiduity and said:

"I declare! that goes well. If you continue like this, you will be allowed to go back to Lilli, when the whole field is tilled."

"The whole field," exclaimed Mimmi, "it is so large that we never can do it!"

"Oh yes, my little children," answered the old woman; "if you are as diligent as you have been today, it will be done in a year. You shall have this evening to yourselves as a reward for being so good."

"Thank you, for I am quite tired," said Mimmi.

"And I," added Bibbi, "would like to amuse myself, but what with? There is not even a flower to pick here."

"You may pick as many as you choose, and right pretty ones, too," said the old woman. "Pussy will take you to a place through the rocks, where they grow in profusion and more beautiful than you have ever seen. If you continue to be good and industrious, you shall, in reward, go there once a week."

She called the cat, said a few words, which the girls did not understand, and told them to follow him.

"When it is time to turn back again," said she, "the cat will remind you of it, and then you must immediately obey."

The cat went briskly ahead between the rocks, and the playful Bibbi followed him, skipping. Mimmi had thought of employing the leisure hour in easy rest, but when her sister went off, it seemed to her too dismal and tedious to stay there alone with the old woman. She was also a little curious to see where the cat would lead them, and so she slowly followed Bibbi.

Pussy ran along a winding path between bushes and rocks, until he came to a perpendicular reddish-brown cliff. There he stopped and scratched with his claws against the rocky wall, which instantly divided and left a small passage. The girls were amazed and did not know whether they should venture in, but the cat turned round and looked at them so pleasantly and intelligently, that they took courage and went on, hand in hand. They had not gone many steps before they saw the bright sunshine stream towards them from the other end of the passage. All fear had vanished and they advanced boldly.

After a while they heard the blithe song of birds,

and distinguished amid it, a clear fine voice, which plainly sang a little verse of welcome to them. The girls hastened towards the aperture and paused, agreeably surprised at the sight they had before them. They stood in a verdant meadow, filled with large luxuriant trees. The ground was covered with innumerable flowers of all colors; the trees swarmed with birds of brilliant plumage, of which some were building their nests in the branches, and others carrying food to their young. They flew about, sang and worked in their way. All was joy and activity.

Bibbi and Mimmi liked a little rose-colored bird especially, with a large white tuft on its head, which was busy in a gigantic oak, and they believed fully and firmly, that it was the bird that had sung so beautifully and intelligibly. In the midst of the meadow lay a little clear pond and in it a tiny island.

"Oh, how glorious! how lovely!" exclaimed the sisters, and embraced each other, wild with joy.

"Come, Mimmi," said Bibbi, "I see a boat by the bank; we will sail over to the little island and see what it is that shines so white among the rose bushes."

Neither Bibbi nor even the sluggish Mimmi now felt any weariness; they ran to the bank, preceded by the cat, placed themselves in the boat, pussy spread the

sail, seized the rudder with one paw, and in a few seconds they were out on the pond. The white thing, which the girls had caught a glimpse of between the bushes, was an altar of pure marble, surrounded by blooming roses and jasmines. On the altar stood in large gold characters: "*Dedicated to Diligence.*"

When the sisters had surveyed the island, they returned to the meadow, ran about in the grass, picked flowers and berries, and sat down under the trees to make wreaths. Pussy laid himself at their feet. When the wreaths were done and they had decorated each other's heads with them, the cat got up, began to mew and pointed with his paw to a large blooming linden. The girls turned their eyes there and saw a little swing, which hung by silken cords to the branches of the tree. They hurried to it, seated themselves, and the obliging pussy swung them with all his might.

But now evening drew near, the shadows fell longer and longer, finally pussy let go of the cord and gave them to understand through a loud mew, that it was time to start homeward. Bibbi and Mimmi sighed, but what was to be done? The cat was now their master and they were obliged to obey, although very unwillingly. The little rose-colored bird sang a farewell to them, in which all the other birds joined, and

with tears in their eyes, Bibbi and Mimmi turned round and responded heartily to their adieu. They were soon back with the old woman, and although they again felt right troubled and unhappy, there was still a consolation in the hope of being allowed to visit the wonderful meadow once a week, and this hope sustained their courage and good-will.

For quite a while things went on tolerably well; they worked pretty diligently and were several times permitted to amuse themselves in the meadow. But finally their old bad habits returned, and it was hard for them to overcome them. Mimmi lay flat down in the sunshine during working hours and Bibbi dropped her spade to run a race with the goats. The old woman warned them they were not allowed to go to the meadow, but it was no use.

One day the old woman had gone away and admonished them to work steadily in the field. They promised to do so, but scarcely was she gone, before Mimmi stretched herself out on a large flat rock to snooze, and Bibbi commenced throwing pebbles at some sparrows that flew over the field.

The cat, whom the old woman had commanded to look after them, ran from one to the other, mewing and growling, but they paid no attention to it. All at once they heard the old woman's voice, calling to

them. Mimmi sprang up frightened, and Bibbi threw away her stones and hurried to her work. There stood the old woman, dark and threatening.

"Unfortunate and heedless children!" said she, "with sorrow and indignation I find, that neither my kindness nor severity is able to make you better. I was unwilling to employ the last hard means, but now it must be done. You are the Creator's noblest work, you are human beings, and yet many of the irrational brutes behave more sensibly than you. As a punishment you shall leave the form you now have. You, Bibbi, I will change into an ant, and you, Mimmi, into a spider. Learn forethought and industry from these insignificant creatures, which you despise."

The old woman raised her crutch and softly touched the two girls, who were instantly transformed, Bibbi into an ant, and Mimmi into a spider, as the old woman had said. Then she blew on them, at which a strong breeze lifted them up and carried them far away through the air, until at length it carefully lowered them down on the ground. Stunned by the rapid journey through the air, they were not able to collect their thoughts in the beginning, but after they had recovered themselves and considered what had happened to them, one can easily imagine their despair. They had not even the comfort of complaining

to each other, for such small insects cannot talk. They only looked at each other and despaired, each silently to herself.

By and by they began to look around them and recognised their own little pasture at home. They were by the same rock, under the same oak, from whence the old woman had transported them a few weeks since. They did not really know whether to be glad or sorry over it. To be sure it was a joy to see their home again, to be so near their good sister, but ah! they were no longer in human shape; Lilli could not recognise them, and to complete the misfortune they could not speak and through this make themselves known to her. Now they were truly miserable.

"Still we will see our own dear cottage and our darling Lilli," thought both at once, and so crept along the path; but although the way was not long, they needed all the rest of the day for their walk, and it was evening before they got there.

Lilli had already closed her door, although she had not yet gone to bed. They heard the hum of her spinning-wheel and her cheerful singing. Poor spider and ant! How their little hearts beat!

The night was light and the moon shone full and clear. They saw everything around them. Lilli's tree stood high and luxuriant, full of ripe fruit; the

flower-beds and kitchen-garden thrived and were in beautiful order; the house was newly white-washed and looked so pretty in the green grass; yes, everything gave evidence of blessing, industry and comfort.

Ah! how happy Lilli was! But she deserved her happiness, and they deserved their fate. At length the spinning-wheel ceased and Lilli retired to rest. The spider crawled up into a crack in the wall, and the ant lay down on the threshold. The good Lilli slept so calmly and peacefully, while her poor sisters outside her closed door could scarcely get a wink of sleep the whole night on account of their grief. Had Lilli known this, she would not have slept so well. Her grief would then have been as great as theirs.

The sun rose again and the industrious Lilli with it. When she had dressed herself, she hastened out to attend to her occupations in the farm-yard and henery. When Bibbi, who lay on the threshold, heard her coming, she lifted up her little head and looked at her, in the hope that Lilli might perhaps notice her and, through some mysterious feeling, divine who the poor ant was. But quite carelessly, without knowing anything about it, Lilli walked right over her, and it was lucky that she was not crushed. When Lilli turned round to shut the door, she happened to see the spider, which crept forth from its crack.

"Foy!" said she, "what are you doing here, I like neither spiders nor cobwebs," and with this she took it by one of its long legs and threw it far from her.

The spider fell down in a puddle, and came near drowning, before it succeeded, with great difficulty, in working itself up on the ground. This was the unfortunate result of their attempt to approach Lilli. One can easily imagine how terrible this was for Bibbi and Mimmi. They found, however, that they had no help to expect from Lilli, and that nothing remained to them but to go in the woods and live each according to her nature, as well as she could.

It was yet summer and thus not necessary to have a roof over one's head. Mimmi procured the food she absolutely needed to keep her from starving to death, and then sunned herself in indolent ease the greater part of the day. Bibbi roamed around over the field and garden, lived well on berries and fruit, but it was tedious to be so solitary. Once she tried to get into the company of some other ants, that had a large ant-hill under a pine. It seemed to her that it would be pleasanter than to constantly go alone, and then she could creep in to them, if the weather became rainy and cold. The ants received her kindly, gave her shelter and food, but then expected her to help them in their work. She did so a

few days, but afterwards it became too dull, the ants never played, only worked, she could not stand it, and so she left them.

In the meantime the summer passed tolerably enough, but it was soon over, then came autumn, and then it was worse. It was cold and there was no food to be had. The berries were gone, and the fruit, which Bibbi so much liked, was all picked and carried in from the garden. The other ants prepared to take winter quarters in their warm domicile.

Bibbi was cold and hungry and knew not what to do. She dared not go to Lilli, for she remembered how near she came to being trampled to death by her. Finally, when it became too hard, she went once more to the ants under the pine and wished to remain with them, but they beat her and drove her away.

It went no better for the spider. Flies and such insects as the spider lives on, had disappeared with the summer, and she, too, suffered from the cold. It is true she crawled into the warm room once or twice, where she was also able to find food, but was always thrown out again, at the risk of her life.

"Ah! how unhappy we are!" said they to themselves, "and our sister Lilli, how happy she is! Oh, that we had followed her example, that we had obeyed the old woman's advice! Then we would now have

been as happy as she, yes, even happier, for then we would all have been together. We cannot endure it longer, we will perish with misery, and our good sister will never know what we have suffered."

It was a cold November day, although the sun shone clear, when a spider came slowly crawling along the little path in the pasture and stopped under the oak by the rock. There it found a little ant, which stood all huddled up by the stone wall. These diminutive creatures were Bibbi and Mimmi. They looked at each other. The spider lifted up its leg, stiff with the cold, and caressed the ant, which responded to its caresses. They realized then, that they had guessed right, and that they at least had the consolation of seeing each other again. When the misery became too great, they had both at once conceived the thought that the wisest thing they could do, in fact the only thing, would be to try to return to the old woman, gain her forgiveness and then obey her faithfully; and it appeared to them as if they ought to meet her in the place, from whence she first transported them and where she afterwards sent them back.

Probably Titi herself had inspired them with this thought, for they had not long been together on this spot, before a storm arose, the ant and spider were

lifted from the ground and carried through the air by the wind, as well as set down unharmed by the old woman's dilapidated cabin. They had barely taken breath after their hasty trip through the air, when the door opened and the old woman stepped out and fastened her sharp eyes on them. Humbly they crept forward to her feet and looked at her so sadly and submissively, that the sternness of her aspect was changed to a friendly smile.

"So you are now here again, you little good-for-nothings!" said she. "I thought it would be so. It is just right, and all may be well again if you will be diligent and good. You have now tasted the bitter fruit of idleness—misery! I don't suppose you have any desire to try it again.

"Here you need not freeze, for neither cold nor snow gains entrance in my domain; here it is continual summer. You can certainly find some crack to creep into when it rains, and no one will disturb you there. I will provide you plentifully with food, but you will have to work and honestly earn your bread yourselves. That I tell you again.

"See here, Bibbi! There in the middle of the field you must build up an ant-hill of pine-cones, small sticks and straws, eight feet high and sixteen feet in circumference. And you, Mimmi, shall spin

a web eight feet broad, and so long that I can lay it across the lake. Both the ant-hill and the web must be ready in precisely half a year, so there is no time to lose. I will now bring food to you, while you warm your frozen bodies in the sun, and when you have invigorated yourselves, go straight to work."

Bibbi and Mimmi looked at each other, disheartened. It seemed to them that they needed many years for such a work. But what was there to be done!

"We will try," thought they, "and strive to the best of our ability, then it may go with us as the good God pleases."

They did so. The first few days the work did not seem to progress much, but gradually both the ant-hill and the cobweb increased in size. The more they became accustomed to work the faster and easier it went, and after three months' assiduous effort they no longer found any impossibility in finishing their task by the appointed time. The old woman was always kind and good, often came out where they were and encouraged and praised them.

One day they perceived with extreme joy that they could again speak.

"This," said the old woman, "is the first reward for your zeal. You can now have the pleasure of talking to each other occasionally. Only see to it,

that you do not neglect your occupation for the sake of chattering, so that I will not again be obliged to deprive you of this joy."

As Bibbi and Mimmi could now talk to each other, the work went on with double enjoyment. Mimmi spun sedulously on her web, while Bibbi dragged along one straw after the other, and during the time they exchanged many hearty, cheerful and sensible words with each other. Time went faster, the work likewise; and habit, a willing spirit and perseverance, together with reflection, made them finally take pleasure in their work. And when they spoke of Lilli, of the hope of going to her and regaining their right forms, then one should see with what celerity it advanced.

At the appointed time both the ant-hill and the cobweb were finished. When the old woman examined and approved their work, the wrinkles were suddenly smoothed in her face, the old gray woollen skirt was changed to light-blue lustrous satin, and Titi stood before the amazed girls in all her majestic beauty. She lowered her little golden wand to the ant and spider, and in an instant they regained their right shape. Titi embraced the happy sisters, and said:

"Your time of trial is now ended; you have com-

pletely changed your disposition and habits, and I know that I can henceforth rely upon it, that you will not fall back into your former indolence and self-indulgence. Therefore I intend soon to take you back to Lilli, who has often thought of you with regret and anxiety, and does not know what has become of you. This evening pussy shall accompany you to the beautiful meadow, and to-morrow I promise you that you shall see Lilli again."

When Bibbi and Mimmi awoke next morning, they scarcely believed their eyes. They were in their own little room, where they had slept for so many years, and before their bed knelt their beloved Lilli, weeping tears of joy, and thanking God that she was allowed to see her so long regretted sisters again. They sprang up with jubilant joy and embraced their dear Lilli.

"Now, Lilli," said they, "you will never more have trouble and annoyance from us. Henceforth we will faithfully assist each other, all three of us. But how pretty and neat you have it! Newly painted and everything better than before. Yes, that is it, you have not had your two lazy sisters, who ate up all your substance; but now, Lilli, now we will honestly help you to earn both for yourself and us."

One cannot imagine how much the sisters now had

to say to each other. The good Lilli wept bitterly when Bibbi and Mimmi related what they had suffered, and she screamed with fright when she heard how near she had been to depriving them both of life.

They were all happy and well now, however; Mimmi and Bibbi kept their word faithfully, and when Titi, after some time, visited them, she found with satisfaction that Bibbi and Mimmi were as industrious, orderly and sensible as their sister Lilli.

They all thanked Titi for the care she had bestowed upon them, and Bibbi and Mimmi acknowledged that without her severity, they would never have become so capable, contented and happy as they now were.

They afterwards lived together many years, equally happy and diligent, and enjoyed undisturbed comfort and blessing.

IN THE BABY-HOUSE.

"HO! ho! Yes, yes! Now Beda has at last gone to bed, so that others can do as they have a mind to a while," said a tall, slender doll with a worn-out composition head and the end of her nose broken off, at the same time stretching herself comfortably on the three-legged sofa in the parlor, and making the little piece of furniture creak under her weight.

"What miserable furniture they have here!" she burst out in an indignant tone; "and they don't keep it in good order either! Didn't Beda get this set last Christmas, and just see how it looks! There ain't two chairs in this room that have four legs to them. Oh dear, I am freezing!" she resumed after a moment's pause; "how cold it is here! Greta!" cried she, seizing the bell-cord, which was hung on the wall by a pin, merely for show: "Greta, where in the world are you?"

It was indeed no wonder if the poor doll was cold Her whole apparel consisted only of a thin muslin dress, a bonnet trimmed with flowers, and a red woollen shawl, which she drew closer and closer around her.

The door opened, and Greta entered. Oh, how thin and lean she was! She was not even "mere skin and bones," as we say, for she was of paper. A round face, a neat little black jacket, green skirt and a white apron—that was her whole attire. But she must have had some relationship with "the Lady of the Woods," or with Don Ramedo de Colibrado's honored family, for it was only the front part that was ornamented; when she turned round, there was nothing to be seen but plain white paper, on which stood in large letters: "*Greta, the kitchen-girl, aged twenty-three.*" It is not all kitchen-girls, who carry their certificate on their back.

"Is there any wood down stairs? I am so dreadfully cold," said the doll to the entering servant.

"No, there are only a few coals on the fire, and they give but little heat, as you know, mamsell, for they are only of tinsel."

"Well then, do make my bed at least, so that I can lie down," said the doll. "It is fourteen days since I lay in a made-up bed; and that, too, although

I heard Beda's mamma tell her to put me to bed every evening regularly."

"Your bed, mamsell?" exclaimed Greta, somewhat astonished; "but the Fröken lies there."

"Who?"

"The newly-arrived young lady, of course."

"Ah! the one Beda received yesterday for her birth-day present; I had entirely forgotten her. That is a pretty way!" she added, with a sigh and in a tone of anger. "*She* must be cared for and put to bed, just because she is new and handsome, while I, who for many, many years have shared sorrow and joy with Beda, and who sat with her in the corner the other day, when she was so naughty, and who have lost my nose on her account—I am already totally forgotten and neglected."

The poor doll sighed deeply, and wiped away some tears with the corner of her shawl.

"But," she exclaimed after a moment, turning to Greta, "you must go in to her, the Fröken, and tell her that she must be so kind as to get up, for it is now my turn to lie down."

Greta obeyed the order and disappeared in the adjoining room, with steps as light as the wind when it carries off a scrap of paper. She approached the bed, from which was heard a slight sigh.

"Fröken," said she, "I come with a message from my mistress, who asks you to get up immediately!"

A pretty little head with golden curls, red cheeks and clear blue eyes, peeped out from the bed.

"With great pleasure," said the one addressed, and with a single spring was on the floor. "Here I have been lying as in a steam-bath, with all my clothes on, and two heavy shawls over me in the bargain. It is perfectly terrible. It must be a queer sort of a place, this house! But what is the name of your mistress, who lives in this baby-house?"

"Her name is Lina," was the answer, "but Beda always calls her Rag-Lina."

"My name is *Carolina*," corrected the doll, who had for the last few minutes been standing motionless in the door, listening to what was said; "at least so they called me when I was new, although they must always give us nicknames. Yet I wonder who has made me ragged, if not Beda herself?"

The doll ceased and felt quite confused, when she at that instant happened to cast a glance at the new doll's pretty and well-cared-for toilette, which she compared with her own.

"I beg your pardon," said she in a more polite tone to the new-comer, "I beg your pardon for

being so badly dressed, but I am not to be blamed for it; that is just the way one gets in this house."

"Do they?" said the latter, frightened.

"Be so kind in the meantime as to step into the parlor, and we will have a little chat together," continued Rag-Lina; "and do not think that I am such a tattered object as I appear. I will tell you, that I am made of the finest kid and stuffed with bran. May I ask your name?"

"Sigrid."

"And my name is Carolina, as I told you."

Thus the acquaintance was made, and the two dolls entered the parlor. But here Sigrid threw an astonished glance over the room.

"How disorderly and unpleasant it looks here!" she exclaimed involuntarily; and she was right, for over the whole floor were scattered fragments of broken playthings, while most of the furniture stood sideways, or had been pushed from their original places.

"Oh! it is nothing extraordinary. This room always looks just so," said Rag-Lina, glancing around the parlor.

"But how can you stand it in this way?" asked Sigrid, naïvely.

"How?" repeated Lina, a little embarrassed. "I

have never thought of that. But," added she, apologetically, "it is just as the saying goes: 'such master, such servant.' You must have been in a very nice place?"

"Oh! yes. In the store where I lay, everything was in perfect order and good taste; the girl who took care of me could not bear any disorder or confusion, and that is the reason I learned to detest it too. But now we must make it comfortable here, shall we not?" added Sigrid, as she began to put the furniture in place, and Lina, affected involuntarily by the example, assisted her in sweeping the floor. In a short time the little room had an entirely different aspect, and looked quite inviting.

"Verily!" exclaimed Lina, as she surveyed the accomplished work; "it is far more cosy here than I would ever have believed it could be! The bureau is free from dust, the looking-glass is shining, and the sofa itself presents quite a respectable appearance."

"Now some supper would taste first-rate," said Sigrid, after putting the finishing touch to her work.

"Yes, I feel real hungry after this fussing, and quite warm too," responded Lina. "But are there any provisions in the pantry, Greta?" she asked the latter, who just then came in the parlor.

"Nothing but some eggs."

"Well then, let us have them!"

Lina went to the closet and took out the little tea-set. Greta soon returned with three eggs on a plate. The two dolls seated themselves on the sofa, and began their repast with avidity. It is true the eggs were a little too hard boiled, but hunger is a good appetizer.

"Now we will divide the third," said Lina, after she and Sigrid had finished one each.

"No, shall not Greta have that one?" replied Sigrid.

"Oh! Why so?"

"Certainly she must have her share."

"I have never seen Beda give the servants part of anything she gets herself."

"Ah! but she ought to."

"Well, just as you say. I must confess that you are much more good-hearted than I," she added quite frankly.

"If that be true, the reason of it lies in the fact that I have been better brought up than you." Out of regard for Lina she now turned the conversation to another subject. "Why do you sit with your bonnet on in the house?"

"You see,"—began Lina, embarrassed,—"well—I will tell you all about it. One day, some time ago, I fell headlong from this house down on the floor, so

that a large piece broke off of my head, and all the cotton (which it was filled with to make it stronger) came out, and I looked dreadful. But then Beda made this beautiful bonnet for me, and told me to keep it on all the time; 'for,' said she, 'if one only wears a fine bonnet, people will not see how empty the head is.'"

Sigrid made several objections to this, and the conversation continued in quite a lively manner, until the large china rooster with a loud crow announced that the first rays of dawn broke in through the window. Lina had forgotten weariness and cold in the joy of having found a companion and a new friend.

"I sat here all alone before, when Beda did not care to be with me," she said, "and that made me so low-spirited and cross, and sometimes unjust and ungrateful, as you saw me a while ago, when I found fault with Beda and received you so unkindly, instead of trying to make your new home as pleasant for you as possible. But with you it is as if a fresh breeze had entered the house, and now everything will be different. Yes indeed!" she exclaimed, full of feeling, "I am so glad, so happy to possess a friend, for however we turn it, we need a support in this world, especially when we are dolls."

Sigrid thought so too, and thus they made up their

minds to assist and help each other, which is in fact the surest support for friendship.

When Beda awoke in the morning, her first care was to go and see to her baby-house. To be sure it was the same as the evening before, but she looked at it with a thoughtful expression in her face.

"Do you know, dolls," she said, "that I have had such a strange dream about you? I have many times neglected you and treated you badly, but it will yet be all right. I did not think before that it made any difference if I was disorderly, or that it could give any bad example to others." With this she began to fix up the baby-house.

Lina and Sigrid looked so touched by her kindness to them, and Greta lay as usual stooping over the kitchen hearth, which she was scouring, and Beda fancied that they all smiled when she kissed them and promised:

"Hereafter you shall all be happy and thrive well here!"

LITTLE GENIUS.

THERE was once a learned man, a book-worm; I do not know whether you have heard of a book-worm: it is a title which commands much respect. A book-worm is one who knows a great deal from books, but little or nothing from life. And our book-worm was a kind-hearted book-worm, who would not harm a worm: he only stuck a pin through insects and spread them out in rows on a sheet of cork, for he was an entomologist. It seemed to him that this was just as it should be, and one never saw him so thoroughly contented, as when he had something new and rare squirming on the pin.

One summer day the sun shone into his study, and the book-worm began to sweat in his green, wadded dressing-gown. He raised his spectacles from his nose, pushed aside the curtains, looked out and saw the bright sunshine. "This is just the weather for insects," said he to himself.

The book-worm took his hat, his snuff-colored summer coat, his hand-net, his bottle, in which he was accustomed to keep rare insects, and started out. As he walked along the street, he trod on a lady's dress and tore it, ran against a little girl, who was carrying a pail of milk, and scolded at a lamp-post, that did not wish to get out of the way. Finally he came to the park outside the town. It was filled with fragrance, verdure, flowers and the song of birds, but this the book-worm did not perceive. He cast his net into the white wolf's-bane and the green willow bushes and the yellow ranunculi; he shook the branches of the wild-cherry,—for wild-cherry trees are good insect places, especially when they are in bloom, and the more worm-eaten they are, the better: all trees ought to be worm-eaten, in the opinion of the book-worm. Besides there was a good opportunity in old, rotten stumps and fallen, dried-up branches:—everything that is not worm-eaten, ought at least to be rotten and decayed.

It was harder to chase the flying creatures in the beautiful park: they had such swift wings, and the book-worm had nothing of the kind. He made an ambuscade for dragon-flies and butterflies, he fished in the air after bumble-bees, millers and fire-flies, and if many among these tiny tribes found their death

through him, he did not spare the spiders either in their webs: the most repulsive were often the very rarest. All were needed in the book-worm's collection, and therein he was quite right, for there is nothing in nature which has not its object and its lesson. The only fault was, that the book-worm scarcely troubled himself about the object, so that he got the creature in his collection and could describe how every part of it looked.

In this instance the hunt had succeeded poorly; for what could the book-worm do with several hundred bumble-bees, horse-flies and millers, of which he had several hundred before? Tired and out of humor, he sat down by the edge of a pond, near a large white water-lily, which had just opened its beautiful young calyx to the summer sun.

"Ah ha!" exclaimed the book-worm with sudden delight. He had found a very singular little creature concealed between the petals of the water-lily. The little thing was scarcely half an inch high, slender as the stem of a flower, white in hue, changing into rose-color, but in shape almost like a human child, except that it was so wonderfully little and had delicate, transparent butterfly wings on its snow-white shoulders. Any other person would have considered the tiny being enchantingly beautiful: the book-worm

also felt moved with joy, but it was because he had found a rare insect

He accordingly stuffed the creature into his bottle among the rest of the flies, and walked back contented to his study. Here he stuck the new insect on a pin, fastened the pin to a bit of cork, and began to study his treasure under the microscope.

"It is curious, highly curious!" exclaimed the book-worm. "Such an insect I have never found before. It must be a *homunculus minimus*—a microscopic manikin! But he wriggles entirely too much—I cannot count the toes on his hind paws. He will have to die on the pin, while I am searching in my books for the genus *homunculus*."

So the creature was put on his pin in a corner of the study, and the book-worm went to look through his books. As he could not discover any trace of the genus homunculus there, he took his way to the largest library in town, where hundreds of thousands of books stood in rows on the shelves, and began to search in them from cover to cover for some description of a manikin which was only half an inch high. This was a long and irksome work. The book-worm hunted and hunted for seven whole years; he became by the seeking and trouble ashy gray in his face, and the snuff-colored coat began to bloom like a potato-field.

but no homunculus was to be discovered, at least none that lived in the calyx of a water-lily. At the end of the seven years the book-worm returned to his study, and now resolved to publish a book of his own about the new insect homunculus, which subsists on the fragrance of flowers, and generally stays by a certain pond, in a certain park, at a certain time in the summer, and has the astonishing quality of only being hit upon by learned men in snuff-colored coats.

The book-worm went straight to the old press in the corner with its dusty drawers, where the piece of cork and the homunculus had been kept for seven years. The creature still remained on the pin, alive, merry and wriggling, as before. It had even grown: it was now almost an inch high.

The book-worm considered this exceedingly curious and turned the creature on all sides. "It wriggles yet," said he, "I must hang it in smoke." And he hung it in smoke over night.

The next morning he went to look at the creature. Miracle! It continued to wriggle as merrily and nimbly as before. It had again grown a half inch. It would have been able to fly, if it had not been impaled on the pin.

"That is a tough specimen," said the book-worm. "I must cut him into bits." And the book-worm cut

the little being into many small bits. But when he turned round, the bits were fitted together again to a whole, and now he saw the creature laugh.

The book-worm was no wicked man, but it provoked him that an insect should laugh. "Ho, ho!" said he; "you laugh, do you? I shall teach you!" Whereupon he took his large iron mortar with the heavy pestle, put the creature in it and pounded it up. "Now keep still," said the book-worm.

It was no go. The book-worm looked in the mortar and saw the little object sitting in the bottom, still merrier and more lively than ever. It was not worth while to try to pound him to pieces; one could as easily pound the air. He had now grown to two inches' height.

"Oh well," said the book-worm, feeling flat and irritated," "if you are of that sort, there is nothing to do, but to burn you up." With this the book-worm made a large fire in the stove, threw the creature on the coals and closed the stove-door. "Now the rascal will not squirm any more," thought he.

When the fire was burned out, the book-worm became curious and opened the stove-door. There sat the little thing sprightly and unharmed in the ashes. He was now three inches high, and could talk. "It is right good and warm here," said the little im

pudent creature with his delicate voice, which was not much stronger than a midge's piping.

"Well, by Jupiter!" said the book-worm, clasping his hands with amazement, "you are the most life-tenacious scarabeus I ever came across!" So saying, he took the creature out of the ashes, went away with it to the woods, and buried it six feet down in the earth. In order to be right sure of the matter, he had a large stone rolled over the place where the creature lay buried.

Still he did not seem to be perfectly certain, but went a week afterwards to the same place in the woods, to see. The woods were there, the stone was there, the hole was filled, but the little indestructible being, which had now become four inches high, sat uninjured and joyous on top of the stone.—"It is very beautiful and fresh here in the woods," said the little thing.

Then for the first time the book-worm became mightily scared. The thin hair rose around his moonlight brow, the green spectacles hopped on his nose, the snuff-colored coat split in the seams, and the book-worm took to his heels and fled as fast as he could: it was such a flight, that he is running still to this day.

Some time afterwards a good-natured old hen-woman came walking through the woods, and found the little being sitting on the stone where the book-worm had left him. "Poor little creature!" said the old woman; "how is it that you are so abandoned? Come, I will warm you in my cabin with the other chickens!"—And she took the little thing carefully between her bony fingers, and carried him home in her apron.

The old woman had a coop in which the hen lived with her chickens; there should the creature stay. But the hen did not like the newly-arrived guest; in less than no time she had pecked his eyes out. The old woman perceived it, and screamed with fright.—"It is no matter," said the little one. Directly afterwards he sat smiling, with sound beautiful eyes, astride of one of the chickens.

"You can live with the little pig," said the old woman; "and if he tries to do you any harm, then creep under the trough!"

Said and done. The little thing was put to live with the pig, but this succeeded no better, for the pig ate him up in a single mouthful. In a twinkling it was all over.

The old woman saw this, and was so dismayed that in her first consternation she wished to kill the pig. She already stood prepared, and it would have been

an end to the pig, had not the old woman heard a tender voice say: "What do you intend to do, good mother? I am all right!" It was again the strange being, who sat laughing on the pig's back.

"Now I shall take better care of him," thought the old woman; and so she made a bed for the little thing on some hay in a bucket which stood inside the door. She had no sooner done it than her old man came home thirsty from the field, took the bucket and lowered it far down in the deepest well. "What in the world have you done?" cried the old woman. "You have drowned my most precious creature!"

The old man became frightened and chap-fallen, for he had great respect for his wife; but before he had time to answer anything, the tender voice was again heard to say: "It is no matter, good mother; I am all right." It was the same little being, who sat and laughed astride the bucket.

This the old woman finally found to be something singular. She put on her large spectacles, examined the little thing on all sides, and said to him: "What are you, anyhow?"

"I am a being," answered he.

"Hm!" said the old woman. "Well, where is the being's home?"

"Everywhere and nowhere," was the answer.

"Indeed, that is very intelligible," said the old woman. "Well, what is the being called?"

"Call me 'Little Genius.'"

"Does that stand in the almanac?"

"Look and see."

The old woman searched with and without her spectacles, but did not find in the whole almanac a saint by the name of Little Genius.—"I understand, said she; "the being is a girl, the first name is Little, and the last name is Genius. People give their children wonderful names nowadays. But when I rightly consider the matter, who knows but what the creature is a real human child? Answer, young one; where is your baptismal certificate?"

"Baptismal certificate? What is that?"

"Just hear it! there is something wrong about this," thought the old woman. "The creature does not even know what a baptismal certificate is; the best thing for me is to get rid of the little one in some merciful way. The worthy pastor would know what to do, for you see, I will not have any witchwork in the house." Whereupon the old woman put Little Genius carefully in a basket, tied a cloth over it securely, and went with the basket to the parsonage.

"Worthy pastor," said the old woman when she

got there, "here is a wonderful creature that I found one day in the woods. It was then four inches high, but has now grown to six; it eats nothing, drinks nothing, never sleeps, and seems to be singularly sprightly and tough. Yet it looks almost like a human child, except that it has a sort of butterfly wings on its little shoulders, can also talk, and calls itself Little Genius, from which I suppose that it is a girl. Now I wish to ask you, worthy pastor, what I shall do with the creature? for verily I do not know whether it is human or what it is."

The pastor looked very meditative, considered the matter thoroughly, and finally requested to see the creature.

"Here it is," said the old woman, and was going to open the basket, but Little Genius already sat on her shoulder, nodded quite familiarly, and said: "Here I am, dear little pastor!"

"Hm, hm," said the pastor, as he put on double spectacles and began to survey the little thing thoroughly. "You do not belong to my flock, where were you born?"

Little Genius made a leap and seated himself, very disrespectfully, on the worthy spectacles themselves-- "Where was I born?" said he:

"The sun is called my father,
The air is called my mother,
The world is my cottage,
Freedom is my cradle;
Power is my life,
Light is my food,
Warmth my drink,
Waking my sleep . . . ."

"I confess," said the pastor, after some pondering, "that this is a very uncommon baptismal record. Such a one is not to be found in my church-books. The old woman asserts, that you are also very sprightly and tough, small as you are. But what do you say about my fly-flap?"

The little one laughed:

"Force crushes me not,
Steel cuts me not,
Fire burns me not,
Earth buries me not.
From air and water,
From fire and ashes,
From wild beasts' fangs,
From human hands,
I go unharmed,
Without a scar,
Imperishable,
Indestructible,

Glad and bright
As the leaves of Spring.
What was it you wished,
Dear little pastor ?"

"I do not wish to have anything to do with you, impudent rascal," scolded the pastor. "Go your way; you do not belong to my flock; I do not know you!"

"Still there was a time, when you did know me," said the little one, raising his delicate fore-finger roguishly.

"When could that have been?" asked the pastor. "I certainly cannot remember it."

"When you were a little fellow I ran with you after the butterflies, and read stories on their wings Then I rowed with you on the clear lake and wrote verses on the waves. Then I stood with you under the starry heavens and saw God's eyes shining in the night."

"Childishness!"

"Afterwards, when you became a youth, when you became a student, I sat with you in your solitary chamber and interpreted the moonlight on your frosty window-panes. I inspired your most beautiful thoughts about honor and heroism, about love and fatherland.

a wished to make you a great man, little pastor, and at that time you yourself wished to become so."

"Youthful dreams!" sighed the pastor.

"You say so now," continued the little one, "but yet these dreams were the best of your life. You have since worked for bread, for the pastorate, for titles and dignities. Had you worked for God's kingdom, little pastor, I would not have dared to make fun of you. But now you wish to beat me with the fly-flap, because you have eaten and slept away the inmortal in your soul. That is not nice of you, little pastor!"

The pastor, fortunately, did not hear the last irrev erent words. He sat there silent, absorbed in his youthful memories.

"You ought to send the creature to the sheriff, worthy pastor, for saying such bad things," said the old hen-woman, who felt offended on the pastor's account.

"Let it go," answered the pastor meekly, and opened the window. "See here, Little Genius, freedom is your cradle; fly to freedom!"

"You shall have my thanks, little pastor!" said the little one, and then flew away like a sun-beam towards the blue summer sky.

The hen-woman had not understood a word of what

Little Genius said, but only that he had not shown the pastor proper respect. But the pastor understood it all very well; it was this, that made him so unusually thoughtful. As they now both stood by the window and wondered at the little thing's disappearance, they saw an old man in a snuff-colored coat rushing ahead over hillocks and fences, panting and out of breath.

"What in the world!" said the hen-woman, who fancied that she knew the man; "isn't that the book-worm? He runs harder than a surveyor in a corn-field."

"Yes," said the pastor. "No person can run like that except one who has had Little Genius in his hands and tried to kill him. When a man then recognises him he gets a great fright—like the book-worm for example. It is well that I did not seize hold of the fly-flap."

"But I hope it won't be dangerous to me, so that I will have to run too?" said the hen-woman.

"No, to you, mother, it is not dangerous. But to me—and to many others. Will you do me a service, mother?"

"With all my heart, worthy pastor."

"Burn up that fly-flap! I might lose my temper if he should come again."

WALBORG'S CHRISTMAS GIFTS.

"POOR Fru Grönberg, it was really cold in her cottage to-day," said Landén's fourteen years old daughter to her mother, when she one Monday morning, two weeks before Christmas, came home with the mail-bag, which the postman, who drove to H—— three times a week, had left with the old lady Grönberg. The latter lived close by the road, so that she only needed to go outside the door to receive the letters and papers, which she had taken upon herself, as an extra business, to forward to the well-to-do citizens of the large village. The old lady had besides a little trade; coffee, of course, and chicory, salt and allspice, as well as Saturday rusks. This trade was to support her and her little granddaughter, for the old lady's eyes had become weak, she could now only knit stockings, and that is a work which does not yield much in cash. The occupation of postmistress did not bring in much

either, "that little charge," as the people of the village thought, did not deserve a large compensation, and the old lady always declared herself contented with the little she received for it every Christmas. Still the captain formed an honorable exception to the rest of the corresponding and newspaper-reading public of the village, and paid the old lady Grönberg well for "the little charge." But with this the disposition to assist had ceased on the part of the good-hearted family. Fru Grönberg belonged to the "better class," and such persons might starve to death in all quietness in such a scattered village, not because the inhabitants are uncharitable, but from sheer thoughtlessness. A clean bed, curtains to the windows and flower-pots on the window-seat, a child, who never has a hole in her clothes, no need exists there, no—at least it had not hitherto entered any one's mind that it could even be a possibility. Walborg thought of it, however, during the cold winter day, and also confided to her mother her thoughts about Fru Grönberg's situation. The captain's wife now feared, when her attention was called to the matter, that Walborg might be right, but how help one who belonged to "society," who visited at the pastor's, the captain's, and who was invited to every rich peasant's "party" in the whole village? how offer her

assistance without hurting her feelings, especially as no human being had ever heard her complain?

"Now, mamma, could we not give her something for Christmas?" proposed Walborg.

Her mother pondered a moment. "I think, that she first and foremost needs warm clothes for the little girl; but we cannot give her anything old, and Walborg, you know, that we have so many poor, who of necessity *must* have help this Christmas, and you know that we are not rich."

"But if I made over my blue woollen dress, mamma?"

"That would not do, the whole village knows it; but still you might help the old lady, if you wish to; but recollect, I do not tell you that you must do it; it is only a proposition I make you."

"Tell it, dear mamma."

"I have intended to give you, who are the eldest and an industrious girl, ten thalers' worth of Christmas presents; if you desire, you shall have the money immediately—but, Walborg, you will then be without Christmas gifts, except perhaps a book or so from papa."

"Mamma, is that really so? I mean, may I really have the ten thalers now? Then I could buy wooller cloth from Kerstin the weaver, she has some set u

now, which is so pretty, shaded yarn for the warp and lavender-colored for the filling, mamma! And then I will make her some other necessary articles of clothing, besides that, buy wood for them, and the old lady herself shall have a warm jacket and—'

"Child, ten thalers will not go so far; but you ought to buy the cloth first."

The captain looked up over his paper and said in an indifferent tone: "Walborg can also have her Christmas presents in money from me; I had intended to give her Schiller's collected writings; she can have ten thalers instead."

"How good you are, papa! Now I will have enough for all that I thought of, but I must go and buy cloth immediately, if I shall have time to get everything ready."

"Wait till to-morrow, and consider, that you will lose your Christmas presents," said her mother with a searching glance.

"But Kerstin might sell the cloth before that," answered Walborg.

The captain rose, unlocked his writing-desk, took out a ten thaler bill and gave it to Walborg in silence, after which he resumed his newspaper.

"Thanks, dear papa, now I can wait until next week with the money I get from mamma; it can be

for the jacket, wood and also some food for Christmas."

"The wood she could certainly have from your father—a load or so—and the food I can send her myself," said the captain's wife.

"Mamma, I know some one else who certainly needs it, the old man Brand, the basket-maker; he has lain ill a long time, I heard to-day, and although he does not belong to the village—"

"That old soldier? Thank you, Walborg, for reminding us of him, he shall this day have the wood I intended for Fru Grönberg."

"Yes, then he can also have her Christmas food, as well as some of it in advance when the wood is sent," said his wife.

Walborg sewed almost night and day in order to be ready with her Christmas gifts, and when Christmas eve came, she stood eager and warm before a large basket with various larger and smaller packages, addressed to Fru Grönberg or her little Ellen. A small load of cut wood stood in the yard; but the Christmas food was limited to two or three pounds of butter, a little cheese and a Christmas cake for Ellen; that the twenty thalers were not sufficient for either ham or pudding, was Walborg's only regret. The stable-boy now came in, rigged out as Santa Claus; he had taken

upon himself to convey the wood and the basket to Fru Grönberg; Walborg convinced herself that he was unrecognisable, on his silence she relied, and then he was sent off.

In the meantime, the grandmother had arrived as a Christmas gift to the whole family; they had not expected her, therefore the joy became so much the greater, for she was extremely loved by them all. The children knew of old that she never gave any Christmas presents, but usually absented herself when these were distributed—a sorrowful, a bitter memory, connected with this custom, was the cause of it—but still much of Christmas delight came with her, for no one could amuse the little ones better than she.

This evening, however, she stayed down while the Christmas gifts were given round, and Walborg seated herself on a stool beside her and chatted away more lively than usual. Package after package was opened, Walborg's brothers and sisters were jubilant with joy. The grandmother looked at her attentively; not one single gift fell to her share, and her sacrifice was not mentioned; her mother only said, as if in passing: "Fru Grönberg did not know Lars, but he ran away from them as soon as he had thrown the wood in the entry." Walborg could not answer, for—she had never before been without Christmas presents.

"Too bad, Walborg hasn't dot the least thing!

She may take my animals,'' cried a little toddling creature of three years, whereupon she carried a box filled with toy animals to her sister, who tried to smile when the little one persisted in her efforts to make a little pig stand up on Walborg's hand. They had now emptied the basket, when the door opened and a sort of bundle was placed cautiously on the floor. "What now?" said the Captain almost sternly, when he read: "For Walborg." But his wife shook her head. Walborg approached to undo her only Christmas present, when two small hands came out first and then a rosy countenance and a pair of childish lips cried with wild delight: "It is only I, dear Walborg, only Ellen, who wishes to thank you and show you her new clothes!"

Fru Grönberg stood in the hall, as well as Kerstin the weaver, who had happened to be present when Santa Claus came to Ellen, and so the giver was discovered. Walborg kept her "Christmas gift" as well as Fru Grönberg, the whole evening, and never had she, as now, experienced the truth that it is far sweeter to prepare others a joy, than to expect others to do it for us. When she bade her grandmother and her parents good-night, it seemed to her that these three had never embraced her so tenderly as on this Christmas evening.

THE BOY WHO COULD STAND ON HIS NOSE.

IN a close and dark alley in the large city, high up in a poor little garret room lived an old woman with her little grandson; the latter's parents had died of the cholera the year before, so that the little boy would have stood entirely alone and forsaken in the world, if the old grandmother had not taken him to her home.

Come, we will go up the dark steep stairs. Look out, take my hand, so that you do not fall! There now, we are up at the door, we lift the latch, if you feel as I, and we stand in the little attic room.

The grandmother sits by the window and spins; before her sits the little boy, Janne, on a bench, reading an old yellow paper, which he shortly before got in the form of a horn, when he was down in the store and bought snuff for his grandmother.

The old woman looks so thin and poor. Her eyes

begin to be weak, and it is with great difficulty that she can, even with her glasses, read her Bible, which lies there on the shelf above the door.

Let us place ourselves over there in the dark corner, and hear what they have to say to each other.

"Dear Janne, now the money has come to an end, and we have nothing but a little bit of bread left. Poor boy, you never have enough to eat, but still you grow, and therefore have more appetite." This said the grandmother, and made her spinning-wheel go faster.

"Listen, grandmother; do not trouble yourself about me. I shall hereafter take care of myself," answered Janne, and looked bravely out of the window, where the afternoon sun shone so beautifully, although it was not able to send a single ray into the garret room.

"Shall you, my boy?" asked the good old woman, smiling doubtfully. "You are still only a little fellow, and what can you set yourself at?"

"Do you know, grandmother, what I read here in the paper? Just listen: 'And Lilliput became a mighty man, you may believe; although he was not longer than a little finger; he became king over many countries, which he governed wisely and judiciously; he was loved by his queen, who was more beautiful than the loveliest flower, and richer than any other

queen; she was good besides, for she had God in her heart. Lilliput thus stood in the midst of good-fortune, and that because he was wise and sagacious, little as he was. He was powerful, had many children, and peas rolled on the church-roof,—do you wish to know more?' What do you say to that, grandmother? I shall go out in the world and become just such a king as he; but I am bigger than he, and will therefore procure myself many more kingdoms."

The little Janne got up from his bench and placed himself before his grandmother, as straight in his back as a candle, and with a proud look just like Napoleon.

"My dear boy," said the grandmother, "what will you live on? You do not know anything, and are too little to work."

"Ah! grandmother, do not oppose me any longer. Have you not told me yourself, so many times, that God feeds the birds in the air, and clothes the lilies of the field; shall He then forget that your little Janne exists in the world? See here, dear little grandmother,"—added he, throwing his arms around the old lady's neck; "in a few years I will come back with so much money that you will not have room for it in here. Then I will buy a large house, larger than this, and grandmother shall sit there on a chair

all of shining gold. Then I will have a beautiful princess with me, who will like you, oh so much!"

Janne kissed the good old woman over ten times, took his cap and rushed down the stairs.

"The good boy! May it go well with him!" prayed the old lady, wiping a tear from her eye and taking a large pinch of snuff.

The park swarmed with people. They gazed at the fine horses and carriages, and at each other.

Janne ran around and amused himself as usual, sometimes by looking at a monkey, which danced after a hand-organ, and sometimes he rolled the hoop with some playmates. They went very fast, I can tell you, down the large path.

But when it began to be evening, Janne happened to remember that he had promised his grandmother to become king. He was hungry besides, for he had scarcely eaten anything for the whole day. Then he saw a nice-looking gentleman coming along, accompanied by two seamen. He could tell that they were Englishmen, for the two seamen always answered "yes," when the gentleman turned to them, and Janne understood "yes" very well, at least as well as "ja."

When the gentleman came nearer to him he said: (in Swedish of course)

"If you give me a farthing, dear sir, I will stand on my nose. I am so hungry! Yes!"

The three strangers did not understand a word of what he said, as you well know, but still they stopped and looked at little Janne, who was the prettiest boy one could wish to see. The gentleman nodded to the two seamen. These nodded back and said "Yes."

"Yes!" repeated Janne also, and in a twinkling he stood there, with his feet in the air, on the very tip of his nose.

The strange gentleman laughed and nodded. The two seamen did the same, and said their "yes" apparently satisfied. When Janne had performed his trick, he reached out his hand. The well-dressed gentleman took out a large gold coin, which he laid in it.

"Yes," said Janne, taking off his cap politely. He was so glad, the poor little fellow, he had never seen so much gold before.

The gentleman, who was an extremely kind-hearted man, patted Janne on his red cheeks.

"Yes, yes, yes," was the only thing Janne had to say. He did not know any more of the English language.

"My little boy, will you go with me to old England?" asked the gentleman.

Janne did not understand a word, but he answered "yes" bravely. And the two seamen nodded to each other just like a pair of Chinese mandarins.

"Come, my boy!" said the gentleman, and took Janne's hand.

"Yes," answered the latter, and went with them.

They proceeded to the wharf, where they stepped into a little boat, which brought them out to a large vessel that already lay with its white sails outspread, prepared to put to sea immediately.

Janne, glad and contented, jumped up on the freshly-scoured deck, where he immediately, to the great delight of the crew, stood on his nose.

The kind gentleman, who was the captain and owner of the large vessel, now took Janne down in the cabin, had him take off his old patched clothes and put on a new sailor suit, which became him wonderfully well. When he saw himself in the glass with his wide white trowsers, fine blue cloth jacket, the black silk neck-tie, the yellow sailor hat and the beautiful bright shoes, he really liked himself, although not much, for he was not at all conceited.

The captain now nodded contentedly, and smoked his pipe. "Yes," said Janne, thanking the good

captain and kissing his hand, as his grandmother had taught him. "One must be humble towards all, especially those who do us a kindness," she had always said.

"Dear me! if grandmother were only here," thought Janne, "and could see how handsome I look! But only wait until I become king and come home with my princess, then—" and so he stood there on his nose before the captain, who laughed so that he almost choked.

The wind began to blow in the sails, and the large ship glided proud as an old Northern queen over the billows. The little boy hurried up on deck. He looked around him so surprised. The poor child before this had scarcely seen more of the world than the alley in which he lived; now he saw the green shores and hills, all as he sailed past them.

Many days elapsed in this way, nay, months, on the broad ocean; and they then found themselves far away on the other side of the globe. Janne was a brisk sailor boy—and climbed the masts as well as anybody. He had grown very much.

One day the large ship cast anchor at a little island, which, the captain asserted, was only peopled with savages. The crew went ashore, and Janne with them

of course; for the captain could not part from him a moment, he must have him constantly by his side.

Janne could not say a word, not even yes, so dazzled was he by all the glory that he saw. Oh! there were palms; birds of brilliant plumage and animals, such as you have read of in your picture-book; the most beautiful flowers one could wish to see—but not a single human being.

The captain of the ship was also very fond of this pleasant island, and he resolved to remain there with the whole crew. Janne clapped his hands with joy, and in his delight stood on his nose in a heap of soft roses.

"If grandmother were only here!" said he, and scratched his left nostril as a sign of his regret. Janne had accustomed himself to use his nose all the time; and you ought not to be surprised at it either, for had he not his nose to thank for his fine clothes and everything? next to God of course. The captain often said, laughing, that Janne thought with his nose, but never farther than it extended. Well, well, Janne's nose was so good a nose, that it could just almost do anything. Besides, it had always been such a habit with him to wish to let his nose have a share in everything, or, as the sailors said, put his nose into

everything, that even when he thought of his dear grandmother, it had to be on hand.

As all on the ship thought that Janne's trick of standing on his nose was extraordinarily amusing, he was obliged to teach them how to do it. The consequence was that the noses of the whole crew were right skilful—although, like Janne's, somewhat too large, which was a result of their constant use.

One afternoon, when they had been on the beautiful island quite a long time, Janne went alone down to the beach. He laid himself in the soft grass under a luxuriant palm-tree, everywhere surrounded by beautiful flowers which nodded to him so friendly. He thought of his grandmother there at home far up in the North . . . . and fell asleep.

A little elf, who lived in a splendid poppy, had seen him and now flew to him, whispering so many pleasant things in his ear. Through the continual use Janne made of his nose, it had become red, like a rose-bud. As he now lay there and slept with his nose in the air, a bee came humming by and lighted on the tip of it, taking it for an actual rose. It stung him, and Janne sprang up half awake. The bee was surprised, and became sorry for its mistake.

"Forgive me!" it murmured in his ear.

"Ah, my nose! my nose!"

"Forgive me!" continued the bee; "I will do you a service to make up for it, my boy."

"But my nose! Now I can't stand on it any more!"

"That is true, it is utterly incapable of any such performance after this," said the bee; "but in place of it, I will give your nose the same capacity that I possess myself."

"What is that? Do you think that I wish to be a bee? No, I thank you," retorted Janne, rubbing his nose; for it pained him.

"No, but now listen; from this moment you shall, with your nose, be able to inhale the finest of what the flowers possess, their most agreeable perfume."

"Ah! what benefit can I have from that?"

"Why, if you have once really drank in the fragrance from a flower, you will become fragrant yourself. Your perfume—I suppose you know what that is—will be the finest that exists, and in society people will endeavor to come near you. You will be sought after, like the Farina cologne—you have probably heard it spoken of. Are you satisfied now?"

"I suppose I must be."

"Thanks, adieu to you. Good luck!" And the bee flew away, feeling glad at having consoled the poor boy.

"I will see if the gift I received is worth anything," thought Janne, and picked a jasmine which he put to his nose.

He smelt it; never had he known anything more agreeable; his mind almost became stupefied in fragrance, and he seemed to see the brightest scenes around him; this the bee had forgotten to tell him.

But as he went on, inhaling with delight the sweet odors, without looking before him, he stumbled over a stone, and fell flat—knocking the unfortunate nose against the stone, so that the blood gushed from it. It pained him very badly, and the poor boy began to cry, so that the stone itself became moved, and asked him if he nad hurt himself much.

"My nose! my nose!" was the only thing he could answer.

"Poor boy, it was in a certain sense my fault, but I will make you a reparation for it, if you do not feel bad."

"Ah! you are only a stone, what can you have to give?"

"Well, my boy, the nose injured by me shall receive the capacity, that as soon as you approach it to a rock, this shall immediately open, and all its glories shall stand revealed to you. In this way you can become a great man, and obtain knowledge of that which is concealed in the depths of the earth."

"You have my thanks for the gift!" said Janne, and went away. And the stone lay there so calm and contented, for it wished all people well.

When Janne had gone a little distance he came to a large rock. He put his nose against it, and lo, it straightway opened. He stepped in. It was just as if he had come into a large church; on both sides of him were immense pillars of gold, silver, zinc, iron, &c., and everywhere he trod on precious stones. He came into a little room that was lighted by a kind of torches. Here on a seat, which was cut out of the rock, sat a young woman. She held in one hand a torch, and in the other a book. When she saw Janne, she nodded to him, and told him to take a seat beside her.

"I am the goddess of subterranean knowledge. Many worship me, but few are they who have been so near me as you. See here, read in this book; it can be understood by all if they can only spell and put words together. Here shall you discover much, which hitherto neither you nor any one else could divine. But you must only read a single leaf; that which follows is for another century."

Janne thought that this was a little strange, but he was undaunted, and did as he was commanded. He read. With every word he seemed to see an entirely

new world opened to him. The mistress of the place took a gold ingot in her hand. "See here, what is this?" she asked him. He thought in the beginning that it was pure gold, the same metal of which Englishmen made their money, but it changed gradually, and became in the end a handful of dust.

"You see now," said she; "what is all this which the inhabitants of earth worship? It falls to nothing before the eyes of the wise."

She then tore out the leaf which Janne had read, and gave it to him.

"Take this," she said. "As long as you have it you will be great in the highest knowledge!" With this she extinguished her torch and disappeared.

When Janne came out he rubbed his eyes and—his nose. He had reason to prize it, is it not so?

Janne and his friends stayed several years on this delightful island. But one day they resolved to go back to Europe. After a year and a half's voyage on the stormy sea, Janne arrived in the large city where he was born.

He hastened to the garret room where he had lived with his grandmother. He sprang up the stairs and entered the little dark room. The old lady still lived, and sat by the window, just as when he parted from her. But she was blind from age.

He threw his arms around her neck, called her by name, and mingled his tears of joy with the good woman's. A perfume of the freshest roses filled the room. It was just as if one walked in an Eden.

A little while afterwards the door opened, and a young girl entered. She was an old playmate of Janne's. They both became so heartily glad when they took each other by the hand

Janne brought with him from his travels a little fortune.

"It is not much—it is to cross the river for water, and turn back with a long face," said outsiders, and shrugged their shoulders at the returned traveller.

But Janne, his former playmate, now his wife, and the old grandmother lived happy and contented in their garret chamber. The most agreeable fragrance prevailed around them: that of love and blessing—and they all possessed the hidden knowledge which Janne himself acquired in the bosom of the rock—namely, that the earth's treasures are only dust, and that the world's greatness is the work of *Him*, who brought forth *all from nothing.*

Janne thus lived in the midst of good fortune, and that because he was wise and sagacious. He was rich, had many children, and—the peas rolled on the church-roof. Do you wish to know more?

WINTER PLAY. NO. I.

OLLE, WHO WENT ON SNOW-SHOES.

Characters: OLLE.
THE MOUNTAIN KING.
NALLEY.

(*The scene is a large wood, with high drifts of snow. If pines can be had, it is well; and if they cannot be had, it is just as well. The chairs are trees; the footstools are little snow-banks; the sofa is a mountain; and the table is a large rock. The King sits, in his royal attire, on the mountain.*)

The King (alone). "Here I sit, a king in my kingdom. My power extends far and wide. I have command over all the mountains and woods. I am a great king; but I begin to be old. I am in my six thousand six hundred and fiftieth year. When I was young, some thousand years since, I raced with the reindeer over the fields of Lapland, and helped myself to a good steak, when I felt like it. But now my limbs are stiff, and I sit here to watch for some fat prey for my breakfast. I have had nothing to eat for six

weeks but a poor squirrel and a bird. I might, if I chose, command my "trolls"* to fry a wolf for my repast; but it is beneath my dignity. I prefer to serve my own at table. But there, somebody is coming. I wish it were a horse. Oh! what do I see? It is a little scamp of a boy. Still, for want of something better, he may do for breakfast. I will hide myself here behind the mountain."

(Olle walks in on his snow-shoes, singing a merry song.) "Whew! how it goes! Hurra! Now I am in the midst of the woods. Oh! what high mountains! And such gigantic pines! This is something quite different from the little grove at Bromhill. But what was it I intended to do in the woods! Ah!—see how the bears were getting along. . . . . Here no one is afraid. Olle is man enough to take six bears by the collar." (He looks around.) "Yes, certainly five. Only I wish the snow was not so awfully deep. Most surely, I could manage four. Especially if I had an iron point to my stick. But it is just as well, three of them may come at once. The worst of it all is, how shall I get them home when I have killed them? I will take Matts with me, and then we will draw them, one on each sleigh. I will sell the feet, and buy a real gun that they load with

* Trolls is the Swedish name for spirits of the woods.

powder; and now let them come—fifty-four snub-nosed, ugly, stupid bears. Hallo! what is that behind the great pine?"

*Nalley** (on two legs.) "Rum! bum! bum!"

Olle. "Mercy, it is a bear." (Would turn around, but stumbles over his snow-shoes.)

Nalley. "Rum! bum! bum! Who is that screaming in the woods, so that I cannot sleep in my den?"

Olle. "Dear, good Nalley, it is only me. It is little Olle from Bromhill, who is out walking on his snow shoes, just for amusement. It can not do any harm if I sing a tune to warm myself, for you see, Nalley, I have only my jacket; and it is a little bit cold so early in the morning. I will soon be off again.

Nalley (stays in the way of Olle.) "Rum! bum! bum! Will you let me have your jacket first, and then you may go? I need the jacket to cover my little Nalleys with."

Olle. "Now listen, Nalley, I would gladly give you my jacket, but mother, at home there, would be so angry if I returned without it. And, therefore, Nalley, please wait till to-morrow; I will then come here with Matts and a couple of other boys, to bring

* Nalley is the common name among children for bear

you a good sheep-skin for the little Nalleys, that they may have it real warm and comfortable."

Nalley (lifts up his paw.) "Will you give me the jacket or not? Rum! bum! bum! Will you give me the jacket?"

Olle. "Dear, sweet little Nalley, it is a bran-new one, and there is only one hole in the elbow."

Nalley. "Rum! bum! bum! I believe you are afraid."

Olle. "Not in the least. How could I be afraid of such a good little Nalley as you, who are so very nice and kind? But you see, Nalley, I feel so embarrassed at meeting with you in this unexpected way. I have always been very fond of bears, for *they* are quite a different thing from naughty hobgoblins, that live here in the woods. I do not care the least for such stupid things. Them I take by the collar, so that it spins around their ears, and shake them so that . . ."

The King (rises by the side of the mountain). "Well, shake me now, if you have courage enough!"

Olle (screams). "Hew! hew! hew!"

The King. "Why do you not take me by the collar, so that it spins around my ears?"

Olle. "Gracious hobgoblin, spare my life. I am only little Olle from Bromhill, and came out to

amuse myself here in the woods, with my acquaintances."

The King. "That is very possible, but it does not hinder me from eating you up for my breakfast."

Olle. "If you please!" (tries again to escape).

The King (holds him). "Be calm, my boy, I am not so particular; you will taste right good."

Olle. "Wait a little; I know of one who will please your grace much better, and that is the old horse on Bromhill. He is so fat, your grace, that father thought of killing him with a club last fall, and Matts shall come here riding on him to-morrow morning, early."

The King. "'Hem! 'hem! a horse? No, a man is a man, even if he is no bigger than a mouthful."

Nalley. "*Serviteur!* your majesty!"

The King. "*Bon jour*, your excellence!"

Nalley. "Does your majesty like music?"

The King. "A little. Sometimes I make the *fors* * sing for me, and then I roll a few rocks down from the mountain to accompany the song. I like to have it strong, you see."

Nalley. "Little Olle seems to have a very pretty voice. I confess that I was quite surprised to find such a beautiful talent."

* A kind of rapids peculiar to these realms.

The King. "'Hem! Nothing but squeak!"

Nalley. "Undeniably—nothing but squeak; but in comparison with the crow, it sounds very musical. Perhaps your majesty would deign to order him to sing a tune before you eat him?"

The King. "Well, I may. It would strengthen my appetite. Sing, little scamp!"

Olle. "If you please—"

Nalley. "Do you not hear that his majesty orders you to sing?"

Olle. "Sweet little amiable Nalley, I will sing with all my might, if you will dance."

Nalley. "What! I believe you take me for a dancing-master."

Olle. "Sweet little good-hearted Nalley, you are so extremely modest. The whole world knows that you are a fine cavalier; and no one can dance a polka-mazurka like you."

Nalley. "I flatter myself really upon having made some attempt, but—"

The King. "Dance, your excellence!"

Olle. "Perhaps you would be pleased to have a waltz?"

Nalley. "Anything that may amuse his majesty will give me the highest pleasure."

Olle. "Well, go ahead." (He sings.)

The King (delighted) "I must say this is beautiful music and a very graceful dance."

Olle. (continues singing.)

The King. "Sing again the same tune! How was it?" (The King is dancing too—Olle withdraws more and more. While singing he runs away on his snow-shoes.)

The King (out of breath.) "No, sing a little more, I lost the tune. More music! More music! It was a magnificent tune. But where is the fiddler gone?"

Nalley (also out of breath.) "No, sing a little more! I lost the tune completely. Where in the world is Olle gone?"

Olle (behind the scenes.) "Adieu, Mountain King. Adieu, Nalley!"

The King. "My breakfast! My breakfast! Come here, Nalley, I will eat you up instead."

Nalley. "Serviteur, your majesty. Rum! bum!" (sets off.)

Olle. (far away, singing.)

The King. "It was a magnificent tune!" (takes a pinch of snuff), "but a very slim breakfast!"

MAMMA.

HOW many times a day the children cry: "Mamma!" "Dear mamma!" "Sweet mamma!" would not be easy to count, even when there is only one child in the house, but when there are several, this computation would be utterly impossible even for the most skilful mathematician.

Children turn to their father in more important matters, when it concerns pen and paper, the purchase of a school-book or other necessary articles, or in the question of dangerous sports, such as swimming, skating, visits to the stable and barn-yard, sawing-mill, &c.

The questions addressed to the mother, on the contrary, embrace the whole little world of the childrens' interests, the whole scale of their diverse moods, desires and thoughts. Questions and petitions, entreaties for advice and help, inquiries about plays, doubts concerning occupations, religious reflections,

and a thousand other things intermingle with each other.

"Mamma, may we go out in the garden to play before breakfast?"

"Mamma, may I have half a biscuit more?"

"Mamma, will you give me a handkerchief?"

"Mamma, do you know where my hat is?"

"Mamma, Carl is all the time teasing me."

"Mamma, has little sister playthings in heaven too?"

"Mamma, I am awful hungry."

"Well, well, my darling."

"Mamma, now I am papa—just in fun, you know," adds he prudently, in order that the illusion may not be too great.

"Mamma, will you thread my needle?"

"Mamma, are you angry yet? Dear mamma, do not be angry with me!"—at which the tears of repentance flow abundantly.

"Mamma, isn't Bertha here?"

"Mamma, there are two pears left."

"Do not trouble yourself at all about the two pears."

"Mamma, Carl won't play with me."

"Yes, mamma, certainly I will, but he always wants to be driver and I always have to be his horse."

"Mamma, what color shall I take?"

The young painter had a great desire to give the industrious country-man's breeches a rose-color, but concludes to follow his mother's advice to rather paint them yellow.

"Mamma, I have hurt myself."

"Mamma, I can climb up here without taking hold."

"Mamma, which is the oldest—Augusta Lindberg, or Anna?"

"Mamma, have you a little string? Oh, yes, mamma, you surely have, only you will not give it to me."

"Mamma, just see how high I can throw."

"Mamma, what shall I do? It is so tedious."

"Mamma, can I have a light on the piano?"

"Dear mamma, tell us a story."

"Mamma, will you hear my lesson?"

"Mamma, I am so sleepy."

Mamma, mamma, and a thousand times mamma! There is no end to the calls after mamma.

Then at night, when all are asleep, one hears:

"Mamma, I am so thirsty."

"Mamma, give me a kiss."

"Mamma, it itches so in my back."

"Mamma, mamma, mamma!"

"Well, what in the world is the matter now?"

"Mamma, it doesn't itch any more."

Who of you, little friends, do not know how often you have cried to mamma unnecessarily? But have you all considered how much patience, how much love is demanded of her who has to answer all these questions, who has to settle all your little disputes, and gratify all the desires of yours that deserve to be gratified? Consider this, and then throw your arms around her neck and say:

"Mamma, during the new year I will try to be as good as you are."

THE EXILE.

UNDER Titania the Fifth's reign, lived a lovely little fairy named Lili. She was Titania's maid of honor, and the most beautiful of all the ladies at the court. No one could braid the Queen's hair so well as she, and fasten the delicate spider-web vail.

One Saturday evening there was to be a grand ball, and she had gone out to get fresh rose-leaves, of which she should make the Queen a tunic after the fashion of the time. She went farther and farther, until she by and by, through the bushes, caught sight of a little girl, who sat in the grass stringing strawberries on a straw. The child had thrown her hat off, so that the wind played with the golden curls.

The fairy stole softly behind her; but the little girl soon sprang up to look for some flowers. When she came back, her hat was full of beautiful strawberries, which Lili had picked. Hidden by the leaves,

she saw with a smile how the berries disappeared between the little girl's red lips. She felt strangely drawn to this human child. Then the bells from the other side of the lake rang their curfew, and the little girl clasped her tiny hands, looked up to heaven and whispered a prayer.

The fairy experienced unaccountable feelings. To be sure, she had often taken part in all nature's hymns and sung praises to God; but pray she could not. She saw in the child's clear eyes a deeper joy, a brighter lustre, than in the fairies' glance. She could not go away, not think of the ball now.

But the sun sank; and when the sunset paled, the little girl took her hat and ran away down the path. The fairy turned to go, when she to her alarm saw the moon rise over the wood. The ball was about to begin, and she was not with the Queen! Trembling, she hastened home. Titania received her with angry looks:

"Where have you been so long, you careless thing?" asked she sternly.

Lili sank to her feet and confessed all.

When the Queen heard that she had neither brought the new vail nor made the rose-leaf tunic, she became still more provoked.

"I doom you to leave the court," said the wrathful

Titania. "I banish you! Go to human beings and live in their way, as you love them so deeply. Learn to know labor and need, as they! You may not come back, until you have drawn tears from the eyes which have disturbed your calm and my dance."

Lili went weeping away. What should she now do? She drank dew from the lichen cups on the rocks, and made herself a bed of fine moss. The little stone table she spread with white rose-leaves, and put a flower-bowl of honey on it. She had obtained it from a good old bumble-bee, who had his hermitage in the neighborhood. As she rested, she heard a serenade. She rose. It was a well-known song about "hopeless love, which watches in the silent night." The voice was not among the finest; but still it sounded well. It was a neglected lover, a grasshopper by the name of Cigal. He could not leave off hopping; it belonged to his nature. Now he was the only one who cared for her, and Lilli was quite touched.

There he sat in his grass-green coat, and beat castanettes to his song.

Lili bade a glow-worm shine, as a sign that she listened; she nodded a little through the leaves' green blinds, and he went hopping off. Poor Lili now pondered upon whether she had done wrong in encouraging him. It was a fresh trouble added to all the

others. Finally she fell asleep. The next morning she approached human abodes; she was going to learn to work. Concealed behind a hillock, she stood and saw how a peasant ploughed his field. No, she could not possibly stand it to do that. She built herself a little hut, right neat and cosy, in a retired place, and if any persons happened to see it, they supposed that a child played there, but wondered that the hut was so skilfully built.

She soon learned how people made clothing of flax; and when she found a little fine plant which resembled flax, she resolved to cultivate it. With invention and effort she made herself a plough, whose blade was borrowed from a hawthorn. To this she harnessed two beetles, and ploughed up the little field. Then she sowed the tiny flaxseeds.

Sometimes during all this labor she remembered that the fairy-queen had promised her that she might return to their easy pleasant life, if she could draw tears from the eyes which had charmed her.

"No," said she to herself, "if I should drudge ever so long, I will not occasion her grief."

Time elapsed. Lili had reaped her flax, and already got it on the distaff. She sat and spun outside her door. Then she was roused from her reflections by a ringing laugh, and saw the little girl's face peep

through the leaves. Lili wished to fly, but was now discovered. She told the little girl all; that she was banished for her sake; and showed her the little home.

Bertha was delighted over her new acquaintance, and they conceived great friendship for each other.

"Come back to me when you can," said Lili, when Bertha was obliged to go.

"Ah yes!" cried she; "how have I been able to live without you? What plays we will have together!"

"But do not tell any one that you have seen me," said the fairy.

Bertha promised it, and went home. She thought constantly of the wonderful being she had met in the woods, and gave an evasive answer to all questions.

"What is the matter with you?" asked her brothers and sisters. But she skipped about, and made no reply.

The following morning she awoke with the thought of Lili, and wondered whether it was all a dream. Now she would have to read and work. The trees beckoned and sighed: "Come out to us!" The flowers nodded, as if they knew her secret, but intended to be silent; the sun shone so warm and tempting. Bertha sewed with unusual diligence, in order to finish soon, and then ran off alone to the woods.

Her heart beat; just think if she could not find the way! "Here it is," whispered a wildbriar; "this way," sighed a tall pine. The woods became lighter, the golden sunshine fell upon a little grass-plat. There was the little narrow path like a silver ribbon bound across the grass; there was the little garden and Lili's hut. With a cry of joy Bertha hastened forward, and Lili floated towards her, still more beautiful than the day before.

They seated themselves under a tree, twined their arms around each other, and talked like confidential friends. What wonderful things the fairy related about her home! What new amusing plays she taught Bertha!

But the noon-bells rang, and the little girl had to go home.

So passed the happy days for the whole summer. But it became fall; the trees lost their leaves, and the days grew cold.

"How will it be in winter? Shall we be parted?" sighed Bertha.

"It will be a hard time," said Lili, thoughtfully.

"I know! I have hit upon how we shall do!" cried Bertha, and clapped her hands at the bright idea. "You shall move to my home and live in my doll-house. It is warm, and well furnished, I can tell you."

"But it won't do for people to see me, you know," objected Lili.

"You shall live there incognito. The dolls are so stupid, and they will not trouble themselves much about us."

"Very well, I will go with you," said Lili bravely. "But bring a doll with you next time you come, that I may borrow her clothes."

"You can put on a doll's head as a mask," suggested Bertha.

The disguise was effected, and Lili, clad in Babbette's red and white dress, was taken into the tidy doll-house.

How splendid it was! She sat in a comfortable easy-chair, before a table with a fine tea-service. When the others looked at her she was stiff and motionless, but to Bertha she nodded furtively and blinked her eyes.

The other dolls became envious of the favorite, and Lili tried to think of something to divert them with. She said: "Is there no gentleman doll here? It is a pity."

"I shall ask mamma to get one; but perhaps she will refuse, for my sister and I have so many dolls already."

"If you should write some poetry and ask her,

then she would pay attention to your reasonable desire."

"Yes, if I only could."

"I will help you." Lili now seated herself beside Bertha; they laid their small heads together and pondered.

"Two lines each, begin!"

Bertha wrote:

"Please promise, mother dear,
To give me one thing more,
I wish a little cavalier
Just like those in the store,
With dark brown hair and eyes so bright,
A handsome coat and vest so white,
And a hat
Like the cat,
So glossy, black and sleek.

Of dolls we have to spare,
But not a single man,
And all the folks declare
That it's a shabby plan.
But ah, one beau will scarcely do
For all the rest will want one too.
So dear mother
Buy another,
Else the poor fellow will have no peace."

"How nice! we have done that ourselves!" exclaimed Bertha, looking at the paper.

"The end is not correct; it is not grammatical, as your teacher would say. But you were in such a hurry!" said Lili, critically, for she had a very fine ear for verses.

"Oh nonsense!" cried Bertha, "now I will take it to mamma."

The mother read the petition and laughed. "It is very good, my little girl," said she; "you shall have your desire gratified."

After a few days Bertha received a charming cavalier, a regular doll lion. All the little dames were captivated, and thronged about him. He was so genteel, and was called Joachim. They now forgot to notice Lili. The cunning fairy knew well enough what she was about. One night when Bertha and Lili lay in their little beds, they were awakened by music.

"Listen," whispered Bertha; "do you hear that?"

"Ah! yes," answered Lili, who recognised the voice; "it is one of my fairy acquaintances. He has been wooing me; but where can he be?"

In the moonlight they saw the little singer sitting by the fire-place. He no longer wore his usual green coat; he had a gray monk's cape on, and lived in a cell in the wall.

It was the first grasshopper who had abandoned

the life of nature, and moved into a human being's home; he was now called "Syrsa."*

The two little friends were right happy that winter. It is true Lili sometimes dreamed of the festivals at the fairy-queen's court; but this quiet domestic life had also its charms.

Bertha was her mistress, friend and pupil. One evening Bertha sat on a foot-stool at old Ingrid's side. It was her faithful nurse, who had watched over her when she was a child, and rocked her to sleep. She had rough, wrinkled hands: they had become so from work. Bertha laid her tiny white hand on hers, and said with a little vain smile: "See, Lili, how white my hand is compared with Ingrid's, and what lines she has in the palm!"

Lili remained still and made no reply, but when Ingrid went out, she said

"I can read those lines. Shall I interpret them for you?"

"Yes," answered Bertha, attentively.

"There it stands, that this hand has worked out-doors, and been burnt by the sun; that it has washed your clothes and hung them up to dry, while you were asleep; that it has handled the heavy, hot smoothing-iron, so that you could have a clean dress when you

* Cricket.

awoke; that it has scrubbed your floor and made your bed,—shall I say more?"

"No," said Bertha, coloring.

"Reach me your soft white hand, so that I may see what stands there! Nothing. It is like a blank white paper! Which of the hands is the best?"

"Ingrid's!" cried Bertha, and fell on Lili's neck.

When Ingrid came back, Bertha unobserved kissed the coarse hand with the beautiful lines.

It was a cosy little home which Lili had come into. So it went on until spring. Then a restless longing flew oftener through the fairy's breast; the voice of nature called her, and the cottage became too cramped for her.

One night Bertha awoke. It was moonlight and, she saw Lili plainly floating over the floor. She walked in her sleep. Probably she dreamed that she took part in a fairy dance. She seated herself under a flowering plant and sang:

"Lure me not with colors bright,
Beauteous, flowery Spring.
Wake not longing in my heart,
To Bertha still I cling.

No fairy dance shall I behold,
With mortals I remain;
I'll not cause Bertha's tears to flow,
Nor purchase joy with pain."

The tones died away, and the little somnambulist stole back to her bed and slumbered more deeply than ever. But Bertha lay awake; a thousand feelings conflicted in her breast. What did Lili mean by that mysterious song? She determined to ask her.

The following morning the sun shone so gloriously. It was the most beautiful spring day. Bertha and Lili went out in the woods. They sat down under the green trees. The bees hummed around the newly-opened buds. Then Bertha revealed her anxiety, and mentioned what she had seen in the night; she begged Lili fervently for her full confidence. Lili told her all. Great tears rolled slowly down Bertha's cheeks. Then rang a glad note through the woods, the trees bent with a merry rustle, and a group of smiling fairies surrounded them both.

"The condition is fulfilled, your time of punishment is ended; the Queen recalls you!" cried they to Lili.

"Here is the chariot, which is to take you home," said one, and pointed to a little golden car, drawn by a pair of bright blue dragon-flies.

"Farewell!" sighed Bertha, and her tears flowed abundantly.

A severe struggle seemed to take place in the fairy's breast. The glad fairy-world enticed; the

beckoning coachman was Bell himself, whom she had had a little fancy for:—but to leave Bertha and the friendly home, human beings, with whom she had long shared joy and sorrow!—She hesitated. Suddenly she seemed to take her resolution.

"I cannot go with you," said she to the surprised Bell. "Present my greetings to the Queen! If she asks why I remain here, tell her: '*Love is more than pleasure.*'"

Bell swung himself into his place, and the chariot with the dragon-flies disappeared over the tree-tops. Bertha clasped Lili to her bosom.

"But you resign so much for my sake, you can never become happy," sobbed she.

"You ought to understand that I am not making any sacrifice, for I love," said Lili, and kissed the last tear from her cheeks. "We will play all your childhood through, and when you grow up, I will be around you, invisible, for then you can no longer see me."

When they came home, Syrsa held his last serenade. He took leave and was now going to England. He had obtained his hut in the wall under the smoke-pipe of a steamer, and as his passage was gratis, he intended to repay it with music.

We have since heard that he arrived safely, and

resided with a wagoner. In England he took the name of Cricket. Dickens has written his history.

But Bertha and Lili lived happily. When Bertha grew up, she no longer saw her friend, but was often conscious of her presence. When any little unexpected joy gladdened her, she said: "Lili is here."

When she married, Lili moved with her. People perceived a certain charm, a nameless comfort in her house; but no one knew that fairies floated there. Lili and a friendly little elf had married and established their home under a linden outside. They became the progenitors of that race of fairies, who reside in human dwellings, and guard their comfort.

BULLERBASIUS.

LASSE was six years of age, and reached almost up to Hilda's nose. Hilda was ten, and thought herself old enough to be his aunt. Both squabbled all day long, and scarcely knew how much they liked each other. But they found it out when they were separated. When Hilda was away at school, Lasse had an exceedingly dull time, and did one naughty thing after the other. And when Lasse was gone with his papa to uncle Nygren's, Hilda was lonely the whole week and did not know what to do with herself during Lasse's absence.

Hilda one Sunday undertook to keep a journal about Lasse's bad behavior, in the commendable intention of reading these interesting notes to him at every suitable opportunity. She calculated that it would be to him a rebuke and a warning, so that he would be thoroughly ashamed of his stupidity.

One cloudy day before Christmas, when Hilda had permission to stay home from school and Lasse had been more naughty than usual, Hilda said to him:

"Lasse, come here!"

Lasse sat in a corner trying to fasten on the hind leg of his wooden horse, which he had just broken off, as the horse would not move quick enough with his load. He was in a bad humor, and pretended not to hear.

"Come here, and I will read something amusing to you," said Hilda roguishly, for she had just taken out the remarkable journal.

Lasse came. He liked stories—what little boy does not?—and perhaps thought that Hilda intended to read to him "Lunkentus," or "Blue Beard."

"Now sit down on the stool and be quiet and good, then you shall hear the exploits and adventures of the Brigand Bullerbasius Rummelfelt."

Lasse seated himself dutifully, and Hilda began to read:

"There was once a brigand who was called Bullerbasius, &c. He had a fairy for godmother, and as he made such a rumpus in the world, his godmother was obliged to commence a book in which she wrote down what he did. This book she resolved to afterwards have printed in Helsingfors, in order that all people

might know how bad and unreasonable Bullerbasius had been. Now you see, I have borrowed godmother's book before it was sent to Helsingfors to be printed, and you shall hear all that Bullerbasius has to be ashamed of."

Lasse pricked up his ears. Never had he heard spoken of such a brigand. Hilda kept her countenance and continued:

"*January* 1*st.* Bullerbasius began the year by kicking his bed down, and when he got up he put one of his stockings in the wash-basin, to see if it would float on water; then his mamma came in—for he had a mamma—and gave him a slap with the wet stocking. Wasn't it well deserved?"

Lasse looked astonished, and said nothing.

"*January 6th.* The gray cat lay on the carpet, before the fire. Bullerbasius took pussy, put her in the oven and closed the doors tight. There had not been fire since the day before, but it was still hot and pussy began to mew piteously. Papa came in—for Bullerbasius had also a papa—set pussy free and commanded Bullerbasius to take a red-hot coal in his hand. Bullerbasius tried to run away, but his papa put a coal in his hand and let him burn himself a little. Then Bullerbasius screamed—"

"Oh no, I didn't scream," said Lasse.

"Here it stands that Bullerbasius screamed."

"*February* 2*d*. The boys were riding down hill, and Bullerbasius was with them. Then he undertook to bury his cap in the snow, so that it could not be found until next spring when the drifts melted. But as he that time froze his left ear, he was let off with a reprimand."

"But I couldn't find my cap."

"Listen to the rest! *February* 20*th*. Mamma had some eggs in a basket, which stood in the parlor during the winter, as the room was not occupied, and it was just the right temperature. Bullerbasius found the basket under the parlor sofa, and amused himself by knocking one egg against the other, so that they ran out over the fine green covering of the sofa. For that amusement Bullerbasius was shut up in the closet, but there he found a jar of preserves, and emptied the jar with his fingers. For that offence he was again shut up in papa's room, and there he kept still."

Lasse laughed, a little confused.

"Yes, wasn't that a stupid brigand?' continued Hilda. "Now I will read you more:'

"*March* 7th. Bullerbasius had also a sister . . ."

"Who was called Hilda," interrupted Lasse.

"I believe she was called Melusina. She had a

splendid large doll, which had real hair and real eyes, and was called Ellen. When Melusina was at school Bullerbasius took Ellen and picked out one of her eyes to see what was inside the doll's head. Then he hung Ellen by the hair to the bell-cord, so that she could swing. When Melusina came home and saw poor Ellen, she began to cry."

Lasse became red in the face, and knocked the heels of his crooked boots on the floor.

Hilda continued: "Then Bullerbasius began to cry too, begged his sister's forgiveness, and gave himself no peace until papa had sent Ellen away to be mended. Was it right that he repented?"

"Yes, but you see, Ellen got well again," said Lasse.

"It is only a pity that Bullerbasius had so short a memory! A week afterwards, *the* 14*th of March*, Bullerbasius was to go out on snow-shoes, and had lost his mittens. Then he got hold of mamma's fine French gloves, put them on his paws and started off in the snow. When he came home all the fingers stood out through one glove, and the other he had dropped on the way. Was that nice?"

"I froze my hands."

"Mamma scolded, but Bullerbasius became no wiser. On *the* 1*st of April*, he wished to frighten

old Kaisa He placed two chairs on top of each other before the saloon door, and on them a stool, and on the stool a flower-pot. Instead of Kaisa, the Chancelior's wife came in through the door, and almost fainted away from fright when the chairs tumbled, and the flower-pot broke to pieces. Then Bullerbasius was again shut up."

"*April 20th.* Bullerbasius wished to try his skill as an archer, and shot an arrow through the kitchen window. Let off with a scolding."

"*May 2d.* He pulled the tail off of the rooster, and was punished with an hour's imprisonment in the hen-house."

"*May 4th.* He rowed out on the brook in a bread-trough, upset the trough and got soaking wet."

"*May 17th.* He filled his cap with stones, and sank it at the shore, as the women do their tubs to keep them from leaking."

"*May 22d.* Mamma had planted peas in the morning, and in the afternoon Bullerbasius dug up the whole bed to see whether the peas had grown. Let off with the injunction not to be so stupid another time."

"*On Midsummer-day* did so many foolish things that they cannot possibly be counted up."

"Oh no!" said Lasse; "I only tore two holes in my jacket; one big one and one little one."

"Keep still and listen," continued Hilda.

"*July 6th.* He dug a hole in the garden, and put in it papa's seal, mamma's thimble, six pine-cones, and a frog. Then he filled up the hole with sand. It was to represent a hidden treasure. There was a general hunt for the seal and thimble, until Bullerbasius was brought to trial as a suspected person. Then he confessed that he had buried a treasure, and was punished with a good shaking. Was that just?"

"But I didn't tell a lie," said Lasse.

"Fy! should he have lied in the bargain? Still Bullerbasius had a sore conscience, as it were, for he stayed away the whole afternoon at a neighbor's. Consequently his punishment was just. On the *30th of July* he went to the shore without leave, pushed out the boat and tried to row, but the wind blew hard, and our good man was driven out to sea. Then he began to scream for help."

"I could have rowed well enough, I tell you, but the oars were too long."

"And the rower too short! Then Matts went out with the large boat and brought the little scamp ashore. Bullerbasius was punished with his own

fright. The next day he rode on the back part of a wagon, fell off, and cut a gash in his head."

"I have ridden a good many horses."

"That is possible," continued Hilda. "The *11th of August* Bullerbasius also wished to ride on the ram Pelle. But Pelle took offence and began to butt Bullerbasius took to flight, and Pelle after him Finally they both got into a tussle, and if Kaisa hadn't happened to come along with her milk-pail, there would have been a great defeat."

"I beat him, yes, I beat him so . . ."

"Here it stands that Bullerbasius struck Pelle in his mind, but in reality he screamed: 'Dear good Kaisa, come and help me!'"

"That was because my stick broke."

"Well, let me go on. *The 19th of August* Bullerbasius ate himself sick with half-ripe raspberries. *The 29th* he put Ellen to swim in the brook. *The 30th* he fell in himself. *The 4th of September* Bullerbasius drew Magister Langman's portrait with charcoal on the newly whitewashed wall in the girl's room. For that offence he was shut up."

"Yes, but I climbed out through the window," observed Lasse.

"And then Bullerbasius was shut up in the garret, where he didn't try to climb out through the window

The 18*th of September* they were picking berries in the woods, and Bullerbasius ran after a squirrel until he fell into a ditch. There he lost one of his boots, and spoiled his new trousers. *The* 20*th* he was digging potatoes and hurt his leg with the hoe. *The* 24*th* he fell down from a tree. *The* 1*st of October* he ran through the whole house with his muddy boots, looking for his cap, and found it in the wood-box, where he had filled it full of sand. *The* 8*th* he came home with his arms full of turnips, which some boy had given him, and these the boy had stolen."

"I didn't know it," said Lasse.

"No, he didn't know it, and therefore was not punished. But he was obliged to carry the turnips himself back to Nygard, from whence they were stolen. *The* 16*th* he took a taste out of a bottle of aniline, and became terribly sick. *The* 17*th* he was again so much of a man that he could drive nails through the holes in mamma's tin strainer. The strainer was ruined, and so as not to commit the same folly twice, our hero, on *the* 18*th*, undertook to put a plug in the spout of the coffee-pot. *The* 29*th* he amused himself by setting fire to Kaisa's distaff, while she was spinning, for which pleasure he again had a shaking. *The* 16*th of November* he stole away without leave to the skating-pond, and drew up

another little boy, who had fallen in. For this Bullerbasius was first shut up, and then received a tart."

"I was praised for it too," said Lasse, proudly.

"One don't do a good deed for tarts and praise," said Hilda. "It was worse on *the 4th of December*. Then Bullerbasius got into a quarrel with the Nygard boys about a great rarity which they had found in the stable—it was a dead mouse. Bullerbasius struck Calle Nygard across the eyes with a stick, making them black and blue; and Calle Nygard was smaller than he. Bullerbasius was told to beg Calle's pardon, but he would not do it."

"Calle struck me first," said Lasse.

"Yes, but Calle was only four years old, and Bullerbasius was six. Fie, for shame, to beat such a little boy! And when Bullerbasius would not beg his pardon, he had a whipping from papa. It was the first time for the whole year. Bullerbasius had to beg Calle's pardon, but then came the worst. He begged pardon with his mouth, but not with his heart. A few days afterwards, when the boys were snow-balling each other, Bullerbasius made a very hard ball and threw it at Calle. The ball struck Calle on the cheek, and the cheek swelled up. What do people call that?"

Lasse kept silent.

"That is called *revenge*, and revenge is next to in gratitude and falseness, the very worst things that exist in the human heart. A revengeful person is God's enemy, and all the angels in heaven weep over him. How can such a person ever have any joy and peace in his conscience?"

Lasse set his teeth together, and made a strange grimace to keep back his tears. In a little while he got up from his stool and went away without saying a word.

Hilda knew her dear little brother, and pretended not to notice the grimace; neither did she tell him to stay. In about half an hour Lasse came back, beaming with satisfaction.

"Where have you been?" asked Hilda.

"Well, you see," said Lasse, a little shamefaced, "you remember my sled that I got last Christmas? It is called 'Moppe,' and such a nice sled is not to be found as 'Moppe.'"

"Yes," said Hilda, "I remember that you think more of 'Moppe,' than of the best horse, and you are always boasting that no one else has such a fine sled."

"Well, I have given 'Moppe' to Calle Nygard. He was so glad, do you know, yes, so glad that you can't imagine how awfully glad he was!"

"And you, Lasse, were you not glad too?"

"Yes, Hilda, do you know, I felt so bad about that dead mouse, and I have been so mad ever since, and it has been so tedious here . . . and when you read about how the angels wept, then I felt like crying too . . . and so I went to Calle, you see . . . and now it is all right again. And I am so terribly glad that I don't know what to do with myself."

Hilda kissed Lasse and danced around the room with him. "Shall I tell you something?" said she. "When the fairy, who is godmother to Bullerbasius, sends her journal to be printed we will ask her to also mention the dead mouse. That story was both the stupidest and the wisest thing Bullerbasius has done for the whole year."

"Ask her to speak of Melusina too! For you see, if it had not been for her, Bullerbasius would have turned out a regular rascal."

"Ah! it is not so dangerous with Bullerbasius. He acts badly sometimes, but God has given him an honest heart. He will yet become a good man."

And so he did.

THE MILL THAT GROUND EVERYTHING ONE WISHED FOR.

THERE were once a rich and a poor peasant, who were neighbors. The rich one was always hard and stern to the poor one, who was obliged to borrow money from him. One day the rich man threatened to have the poor man's home sold for debt. The poor man was much troubled, and in his need he consulted his cock, which he had inherited from his father. The cock advised him to travel, and this advice pleased the peasant, for he hoped to receive aid from a wealthy relative, who lived in a remote part of the country The peasant started on his journey, but he had not gone far before he met a splendidly dressed gentleman, who asked him why he was so troubled. The peasant related to him his distress and the object of his journey. The man advised the peasant to return home, as his relative, whom the man said that he

knew, would not be able to help him. The peasant believed his words and resolved to go home again, but on taking leave, the man said: "I will help you though, and give you a mill which will grind everything you wish for, but when you desire it to stop, you must say: 'Halt!' Send your cock to me and I will deliver the mill to him."

The peasant relied on his promise, and went home with a happy mind. When the peasant's wife saw her husband so soon, and with such a contented look, she felt very glad, and asked immediately how the journey had succeeded; but her husband gave no answer, and talked only to the cock, so that the woman thought that her old man had gone crazy from sorrow. The cock in the meantime flew away to get the mill. The peasant waited several days, but as no cock came, he went to look for him and the mill. And the peasant went and went, until he came to a high hill, and lo, there stood the mill on the top of it. But not until after many difficulties could the peasant and the cock take the mill down from the high hill.

As soon as the peasant reached home with the mill, he had it grind money and paid his debt to the rich peasant. The poor man before long became rich, and all wondered at it, for none except the cock, the peasant himself and his old woman, knew of the mill.

But one day the peasant went to town, and while he was gone the old woman had a great desire to eat some groats and told the mill to grind it. The mill began to grind, and when the old woman had enough, she wished it to stop, but as she did not know that she ought to say: "Halt!" it continued to grind, so that the groats ran out from all sides. Then the old woman became frightened, and began to cry for help. The neighbors hastened to her, but when they saw the groats, they began to eat, for it tasted mighty good. The old woman was just on the point of drowning, when the peasant came home and cried "Halt!" to the mill, which immediately ceased grinding. The neighbors, however, had learned where the peasant obtained his wealth, and the rich peasant pondered day and night to discover how he could get the mill. And one night, when the owner was asleep, the rich peasant stole the mill. Still he did not dare to keep it long, but sold it for a large sum of money. The mill thus came out in the world and passed from hand to hand, for wherever the mill went, the cock gave the possessor no peace, but posted himself on the chimney and crowed: "Kukku keku, the peasant wants his mill again. Kukku keku!" The mill was finally sold to the Spanish King, because it was sup

posed that the cock could not fly over the great sea. The king made the mill grind gold.

Some time elapsed, but one night the king awoke and heard from the chimney of his palace, the cock's crow: "Kukku, keku, the peasant wants his mill again. Kukku, keku!" When the king heard this, he became angry, and commanded that the cock should be caught and thrown into a deep well in the king's court-yard. And the cock was thrown into the well. But the next morning when the lid was taken off the well, the cock flew out, planted himself on the chimney, and crowed: "Kukku, keku, the peasant wants his mill again. Kukku, keku!" The king became still more exasperated, and commanded that an oven should be heated red-hot and the cock cast into it. This was done. But as soon as the cock was in the oven, he spouted out all the water which he had drank in the well, and the oven became cold Then the cock flew up and stood on the chimney and crowed: "Kukku, keku, the peasant wants his mill again. Kukku, keku!" The king at this fell into deep thought, and realized that he had done wrong towards the peasant through keeping his property. He resolved to send back the mill together with two ships laden with valuables. The ships set sail, but in the Spanish sea they encountered a calm,

and the crew began to fish. But when they needed salt to salt the fish, they told the mill to grind salt and set it on the bowsprit; but in their eagerness to fish they forgot to say "Halt!" And the mill ground and ground, but when it was full the bowsprit tipped over, and the mill fell in the sea. And there it remains yet to-day and grinds salt, and that is how it happens that the sea is salt.

But the cock brought the ships and the treasure home to the peasant.

THE HAPPY TAILOR.

THERE was once a man who had three sons. Of the two older ones there is not much to say, but the youngest was called Skrynkleben, and he was set to learn tailoring.

But instead of sitting with his legs crossed on the table, sewing, he only had to run around and carry home clothes for customers.

"Here we have eighteen tailors, and I myself am the nineteenth," the master used to say; "there is no room for you on the table."

When the year was out, Skrynkleben requested his wages.

"First do something to earn them," said the master, and sent him to fetch a roll of homespun cloth from the dyer's.

Skrynkleben went. When he came back with the bundle on his back, all the nineteen tailors sat around the porridge-kettle. Skrynkleben threw the roll of

cloth on the table in the work-room. But the table was old and rickety, and although it had held for nineteen tailors to sit on, it now broke down under the roll of cloth, although this was not particularly heavy.

Then Skrynkleben laughed and sang:

"It's the funniest thing I ever yet found,
That nineteen tailors scarcely weigh a pound;
Yes, with needle and thread,
And wax and shears,
And the goose besides and their thimbles on top,
They scarcely weigh a pound in the lot."

When the tailors heard this song, the whole nineteen, enraged, rushed out into the work-room, seized hold of the shears and cried:

"Did you sing so about your fellow-journeymen? We will teach you!"

"There will be some clipping," thought Skrynkleben, and took to his heels.

"Wait!" shouted the master, throwing a piece of wax after him; "there you have your wages!"

"That is wax, that is!" said Skrynkleben, putting it in his pouch, and next apprenticed himself to a shoemaker; for it is all the same if the mind is only content, thought he.

Here he had to prepare wax-ends, and dampen leather.

"That which is all right for the tailor will not do for the shoemaker," the master said to him. But the shoemaker himself did not stick to his last, but thought that he knew everything.

All this amused Skrynkleben, and so he sang:

"The shoemaker is an ugly old snooks,
The more he works, the worse he looks;
He wears a broad grin,
And takes people in,
Oh, bume lian, bume lian,
Bum! bum! bum!"

When the shoemaker heard the song, he chased after him, furious, with the leather thong in the air, and drove him out of the house.

"There is the pay for your trouble!" shouted the shoemaker, as he threw a lump of pitch after him.

"Something for something," said Skrynkleben, putting the pitch in his pouch; and then he apprenticed himself to a blacksmith.

Here he had to stand at the anvil and hammer and weld so that the sparks flew. But when he wished to have his wages, the blacksmith said:

"First show that you are good for something: What can you do?"

This seemed to Skrynkleben to sound so comical when he had the whole year stood and worked at the blacksmith's side, that he could not contain himself, but sang:

"The blacksmith hammers day in and day out,
And his black leather apron flaps about,
He forges such tires,
And puffs and perspires,
Oh, dingltn, dingltn.
Dall! lall! ley!"

Then the blacksmith became wrathful, flung a handful of iron-filings after him and yelled:

"There are your wages!"

"Better that than nothing," said Skrynkleben, put the iron-filings in his pouch and went his way.

He now walked along the road until it began to be twilight. "One has always learned something," thought he, and so he came to an old hunting-castle. Here he requested shelter for the night. But the castellan said:

"If you wish to stay here over night, you can sleep in the turret chamber; otherwise there is no room for you in the castle. But I tell you beforehand that there is a hobgoblin in the turret chamber which it isn't good to encounter. If you would like

to have something to offer the goblin, then go down in the kitchen. There you will get what you need."

"I have something already to treat him to," said Skrynkleben, but still, just for the fun of it, he went down in the kitchen to chat a little.

While he helped to turn the spit, the kitchen-boy related to him that the king of the country had an only daughter. A year before, the king and the princess had stayed at the hunting-castle. The princess had then occupied the turret chamber. But one night there was a terrible tempest. The wind whistled in the chimneys, and the rain dashed against the window-panes. In the morning when the king ascended the spiral staircase to see how it was with the princess, his daughter had disappeared, and there was only a little black kitten in the turret chamber. It was now clear that the princess was under an enchantment, and that it was she who was the cat. The king wished to take the kitten with him, but he could not do it. The cat would not leave the place. Then the king commanded that a silver bowl filled with cream and cake should be placed up in the turret every day for the cat, and had it proclaimed that the man who could free the princess from her enchantment, should have her for a consort and half of the kingdom in the bargain. In a trice, scores of princes came there. But when

they learned that the princess was transformed into something so simple as a cat, they turned up their noses with disgust. But by and by it came out that they themselves had been monkeys in their day, and then the king ordered them to go as far as the road would carry them.

It so happened one day that the cook, who carried the cream and cake up to the turret, came running down with her heart in her throat and declared that the goblin was at work up there. It caused a great commotion. The people said that the councillors and generals of the land, who could do everything, could also serve as suitors; and what the people said must certainly be true, thought the king, and sent a general up in the turret chamber to keep guard there one night and ascertain the conditions. The door was fastened behind him, so that the goblin should not slip down into the other rooms. But the next morning the general was changed into a stone image. Then the king said: "One more!" and sent a councillor up in the turret. But he too became a stone image. "One more!" said the king, and sent up another general. But it went the same way with him. "One more!" "One more!" was all the king said. And so it had gone on until eleven stone figures were placed along the walls of the turret chamber.

"That is a wonderful story," said Skrynkleben, and begged the loan of a pot and a ladle. He got them and took them up to the turret chamber. Here he made a fire on the hearth, and then the castellan came and locked the door and left him alone in there.

Skrynkleben looked around. There stood the remarkable images in a row by the wall with swords, orders and decorations. But the swords were long strips of slate and the orders and decorations only bits of stone, and when Skrynkleben tapped the general on the brow, it sounded as if he had knocked on an empty jug, and when he rapped on the councillor's head, it sounded just as if he had struck his knuckles against the wall, so hard and thick was it

Skrynkleben now put the pot on the fire and in the pot he dropped the piece of wax from the tailor, the lump of pitch from the shoemaker and the iron-filings from the blacksmith. This he stirred well with the ladle, and let it cook until it became like a mush and boiling hot. He then lifted the pot down from the fire and placed it on the hearth. At that moment a door opened which Skrynkleben had not noticed before, and down from the loft came a hideous goblin. Ugh! how wicked and ugly he was! With his grass-green, rolling eyes he glared at Skrynkleben and opened his frightful jaws. They were so large that

the lower one dragged on the floor, while the upper one touched the ceiling.

"Have you seen the match of my jaws?" asked the goblin.

"Have you ever tasted anything like that?" answered Skrynkleben, throwing a ladle-full from the pot down the goblin's throat, so that it hissed around his jaws.

"Hatschiss!" said the goblin.

"You are sneezing," said Skrynkleben.

"Rackacka" . . . the goblin was just going to say something, but crack! he split right in two.

A soft miau! miau! was now heard from the corner of the room, and when Skrynkleben turned round he saw a little black kitten which came purring towards him with its back arched.

"Go up in the loft, there you will find a sword, bring it down," said the cat.

Skrynkleben went up in the loft. There he found a good old broad-sword, and returned with it to the turret chamber.

"Now cut off my head, and you will see something," said the cat.

Yes, Skrynkleben only did as he was bid, and in a twinkling!—there lay the cat's head on the floor.

At the same instant the princess stood living before

him with her brocade skirt and high heels and a fan in her hand, just as she had been before she was transformed.

"You are my deliverer," said she; "and papa shall know it."

"You have my thanks, princess," answered Skrynkleben. "But I am only a little journeyman tailor, shoemaker and blacksmith. Higher in grade I am not."

"What you are not, you can become," said the princess. "Now go and give a ladle-full from the pot to the eleven stone images."

Skrynkleben did so, and scarcely had it touched them, before a heavy stone fell from each of their breasts, and there was life in them. But the pot of mush was not enough for them all, so the eleventh figure did not get a full ladle, and therefore he remained stone deaf in one ear.

They now knocked on the door, so as to be let out of the turret chamber. When the castellan heard the knocking, he hastened up the stairs. The kitchen boy saw it, and tried to steal up behind him. But the castellan said:

"No one may follow me. Those who are curious, can go out in the court-yard and look up at the turret

If anything happens, I will give a sign from the window."

The castellan opened the door. There stood the princess by the fire-place, lively as a bird, and there stood the councillors and generals around the mush-pot, more magisterial than ever. The castellan then asked the princess to stick her head out of the turret window and cry to the kitchen-boy and the others that she was saved. This the princess did; and then the whole company went down from the turret, each and all to their respective abodes. But Skrynkleben remained a little behind them in the entry, and lo! before he knew it the castellan seized him and thrust him into the sentry-box, where he saw neither sun nor moon.

"That is funny!" said Skrynkleben; "luck changes mighty quick."

A message was now despatched to the city that the princess was freed from her enchantment.

"Indeed!" said the king, and hastened with all speed to the hunting-castle to see how things were.

Yes, the princess was a human being again.

"We will have a grand ball!' cried the king, wiping great tears of joy from his eyes with the edge

of his mantle. "Who was it that saved my little idol?"

"It was I," said the castellan.

"No, papa, it was Skrynkleben," said the princess.

"What! Who is that?" inquired the king

Then the castellan was obliged to say that Skrynkleben had come to the castle, and was lodged in the turret chamber, for hadn't the people in the kitchen seen and talked to him?

"There is something wrong about this," said the king, and commanded that Skrynkleben should be brought before him.

"Is it so, that it was you who delivered the princess?" asked the king.

"Yes indeed, it is so!" answered Skrynkleben. "I taught that goblin to keep his mouth shut, and it took him so that he split in two."

"Beg your pardon," said the castellan; "it was I who performed the deed. The princess only says that it was Skrynkleben because she would rather have him than me. She fancies that he looks so merry. That is the whole of it. But Skrynkleben is an impostor, and no one has said an evil word about me. The kitchen-boy can tell you that it was only after I had gone up in the turret that the princess stuck her head out of the window."

Yes, the kitchen-boy could not but testify that such was the case.

'Ah! so that's the way it stands," said the king, striking Skrynkleben over the back with his cane. "Away to prison with the rascal! And you, my little jewel, you will take the castellan for consort. I have proclaimed throughout the land that the one who delivered the princess should have her, and I do not mean to be trifled with."

Skrynkleben was taken to the sentry-box, and the princess wrung her hands and knew not what to do.

"But, papa, you ought to ask all the councillors and generals who were there in the turret chamber. They could testify that it was Skrynkleben who despatched the goblin."

The generals and the councillors were summoned.

"We saw nothing, we were of stone; we can give no information," said they, and bowed to right and to left.

"But say at least, that it was Skrynkleben who put life in you," cried the princess in the ear of the councillor who did not get the full ladle. But he could not hear on that side. He only smiled and made no answer.

Then the princess wept bitterly, and said, sobbing

"But anyway, it was Skrynkleben that delivered me."

When the king saw tears in the princess's heavenly blue eyes, he said:

"This is an enigma to me;" so he resolved to await the arrival of the queen, and hear her opinion; and it seemed to all the kitchen people that he ought to have done that in the first place.

The queen was a sensible woman. When she arrived at the hunting-castle and learned how matters stood, she said:

"We will let the princess wish for three things. If the castellan guesses what she has thought of, he can have her, but if Skrynkleben guesses right, then he may take her. For the person who risked his life to save her, and succeeded in it, may also be able to find out what she wishes."

All thought that this was very reasonable. The princess thought so too, and whispered to the queen what she had in her mind, and the queen whispered it to the king, so that no one else could hear it.

The following day, the king and queen sat in their arm-chairs in the large dining-room, for there had been too much commotion to cart the throne over the bad roads from the city to the hunting-castle, and so they took the princess between them, and the councillors

and generals placed themselves on each side; then the castellan and Skrynkleben were called in.

"What has the princess been thinking of?" asked the king of the castellan.

"Of the cream and cake which the cat ate in the turret chamber," answered he.

"No, that is not correct," replied the king. "Can Skrynkleben tell what it was?"

"Of her wedding-dress of course," said Skrynkleben. "Blue are the princess's eyes, and golden is her hair. If I am not mistaken, the princess wished for a blue silk dress embroidered with gold."

"Rightly guessed, little tailor!" cried the princess; and the king and queen nodded to each other, and all the generals and councillors nodded too.

Skrynkleben was then taken back to prison until the next day; the princess made another wish and told the queen softly what it was, and the queen told it to the king.

The next day, all were called together again in the dining-room, and the king asked the castellan:

"What did the princess think of?"

"As she yesterday thought of her wedding-dress, she has surely been thinking of her wedding-food to day," thought he, and so he answered:

"The princess has thought of nothing but whipped cream . . ."

"No, no, that is not correct," interrupted the king. "Can Skrynkleben tell what it was?"

"May it not be of her ball-shoes? So I believe," answered Skrynkleben. "On roses will the princess dance, and my advice would be for her to take a pair of red shoes."

"Rightly guessed, little shoemaker!" cried the princess, and clapped her hands with delight. And again the king and queen nodded to each other, and the generals and councillors did the same.

Skrynkleben was put in prison again until the next day, but he was just as light-hearted as ever.

The castellan now became anxious, and said to the king:

"I am not one to make a fuss, but it isn't possible that Skrynkleben could guess so accurately, if he did not receive some hint from the princess at the decisive moment. Justice requires that Skrynkleben, this last time, divines the princess's thought out of her sight in the prison."

"Well, as justice requires it," said the king, "so let it be."

When this was announced to Skrynkleben, he said:

"It is all the same. Send some one here in the

morning, and I will tell what the princess has thought of. But I am not used to having it tedious, and tedious it will be here in prison, unless I have some occupation."

"There is reason in that," said the king.

The kitchen-boy, who carried food to Skrynkleben, was ordered to procure him the tools and materials he wanted to occupy himself with.

The princess now made her last wish and whispered it in confidence to the queen, and the queen whispered it to the king, so that absolutely no one else could hear it.

The following day a councillor, accompanied by two generals, was sent to Skrynkleben to learn what he believed the princess had thought of.

When they entered the prison, they found a fire on the hearth and an anvil on the floor. Dingltn! dingltn! there stood Skrynkleben, giving the last stroke of the hammer to a key which he had forged.

"Here is what the princess has thought of," said he. "I strike while the iron is hot."

But the councillor did not hear with that ear, and burnt his fingers.

"Blow on them!" said Skrynkleben, and this time the councillor heard.

The key was now done and cooled off, and so it was

carried on a silver plate up in the room where the king and queen sat.

When the castellan saw what was on the silver plate, and heard the councillor and generals relate that Skrynkleben had said that the princess had thought of a key, he screamed:

"Now you are wide of the mark, tailor! That is not what the princess thought of."

But the princess said:

"Yes, that is just what I thought of."

And then she took the key and went down to the prison, dressed in a blue silk dress embroidered with gold, and red shoes, unlocked the door, took Skrynkleben by the hand, and led him up in the dining-room.

"There had you the key to the enigma," said the princess.

"And to your heart," added the queen.

"Yes, Skrynkleben has forged his own happiness," said the king. "And I who so wronged him that I struck him on the back with my cane! You shall be a nobleman, my friend, a baron shall you be; nay, a count shall you be. What will you have for your coat-of-arms?"

Then Skrynkleben begged as a favor that he might

have the cane, with which the king struck him on the back, placed on his shield.

It seemed to the king that this answer showed fine feeling; and Skrynkleben married the princess, but the castellan was thrown into prison, where he saw neither sun nor moon.

But when the nineteen tailors, the shoemaker and the blacksmith heard how well it had gone with Skrynkleben, they exclaimed:

"We have known him a long time. He is our best friend!"

And when the tailors saw the coat-of-arms, they said:

"He has not forgotten his fellow-journeymen. There is a yard-stick on the shield."

But the shoemaker, who thought that he knew everything, said:

"It is a leather strap."

And the blacksmith said:

"It is a bellows-shaft!"

And so they were all satisfied, and Skrynkleben enjoyed much honor and repute, and became a celebrated man.

THE SEA-KING'S GIFT.

THERE was once a fisherman who was called Laxmatte. He lived by the great sea; where else should he live? He had an old woman, who was called Laxmaja. During the winter they dwelt in a little cabin on the shore of the solid land, but in the spring they moved out to a red rock in the sea and stayed there all summer, until autumn. There they had a still smaller cabin with a wooden bolt instead of a latch, and a flag-staff, and a whirligig on the roof.

The rock was called Ahtola and was no larger than the square in the city. In the clefts grew a small mountain-ash and four alder bushes. Heaven knows how they came there; perhaps with the fall flood. Besides some tufts of velvety grass grew there, some reeds and rushes, two stalks of the herb with yellow seed-vessels called tansy, and four high stalks of the red epilobium, and a beautiful white flower, which is called

orientalis europea. But the rarest thing on the rock were three leeks which Laxmaja had planted on purpose in a crevice, where they had a stone wall on the north side and the sun on the south. It was not much, but it was enough for Laxmaja's kitchen garden.

All good things are three, and therefore Laxmatte and his old woman fished for salmon in the spring, herring in the summer, and *sik* * in the fall. If it was fine weather and a good wind, they sailed to town on Saturday, sold the fresh fish and went to church on Sunday. But it frequently happened that they were alone at Ahtola for several weeks at a time and saw nothing but their little yellowish brown cur, who bore the proud name of Prince, and their tufts of grass and bushes and flowers, and the sea-gulls and fishes and the stormy sky and the white-crested waves; for the rock lay out at the extreme end of the reefs, and there was no green island or human habitation for five miles' distance around them, only here and there a rock of the same red stone as Ahtola, watered day and night by the spray of the waves.

Laxmatte and Laxmaja were good-hearted and industrious people, who lived contented and happy in

* A fish peculiar to those waters.

company with Prince in their humble cabin, and considered themselves rich, when they had salted so many kegs of fish that they had all they needed through the winter and enough left for sale to afford the old man a few papers of Russian tobacco for his pipe, and the old woman a half pound of coffee every month, with as much again burnt barley and chicory to improve the flavor. For the rest they had butter, bread and fish, a cask of home-brewed beer and a firkin of curds; what more did they need?

All would have been well, if Laxmaja had not had a secret desire, which did not allow her any peace. She racked her brains year in and year out to see how she could become so rich as to sometime buy herself a cow. "What would you do with a cow?" said Laxmatte. "She could not swim so far, and there isn't room enough for her in our boat for us to bring her out here to the rock. Besides if we got her here, we have nothing to feed her on in this barren place."

"But there are four alder bushes and sixteen tufts of grass," replied Laxmaja.

"Yes, I am aware of it," laughed Laxmatte. "There are also three leek plants. You can feed her on leeks."

"But all cows like salt herring," said the old woman. "Prince likes fish too."

"You don't say so!" said the old man. "No, I thank you, it would be a dear cow that we fed on salt herring. I will let it go with Prince, who fights with the sea-mews for what is left, when we clean the fish. Drive the cow from your mind, mother, it is best as it is."

Laxmaja sighed. She realized that her old man was right, but she could not forget the cow. The old curds would no longer taste good in the coffee, and Laxmaja thought of sweet cream and nice sour milk as the greatest felicity she could imagine in this world.

One day while the old couple were cleaning herring at the beach, they heard Prince bark, and directly afterwards a beautifully painted yacht was seen, with three young gentlemen in white caps, steering towards the rock. The young gentlemen were students, who were out sailing for pleasure, and now sought land in order to get something fresh.

"Row out here with a bowl of cream, good woman!" cried they.

"Yes, if I only had it!" sighed Laxmaja.

"Well, a pitcher of sweet milk will do," said the students. "But it must be unskimmed."

"Oh! if I only had it!" sighed the old woman still more deeply.

"What is the matter? Have you no cow?"

Laxmaja kept silent. Her feelings were too acute to permit her to answer such a home question.

"We haven't any cow," said Laxmatte, "but if you would like some nice fish, you can have it in an hour, good and hot."

"Here goes for the fish," said the students, and threw themselves down without ceremony on the rocks with their cigars and meerschaums, while fifty silver-white herring were put on the fire to broil.

"What is this small rock in the sea called?" asked one of the students.

"Ahtola," answered the old man.

"Well, what can you have to complain of when you live in the sea-god's domain?" laughed the students.

Laxmatte did not understand. He had never read Kalevala.* But the students explained the matter.

"Ahti," said they, "is a mighty king who lives in his domain Ahtola, near a rock in the deep sea, and has an abundance of all precious things. He rules over all fishes and other beasts of the sea; he has the finest cows and the swiftest horses, who graze on sea-grass at the bottom of the ocean. One who stands well with Ahti will soon be rich, yet one must

* A Finnish mythological poem.

take good care not to irritate him in the least, for Ahti is very changeable and hot-headed. He can be provoked by a little stone which one throws in the water, and then he takes back his gifts and raises a storm, and draws vessels down in the depths. Ahti has also the most beautiful nymphs, who bear the train of his queen, Wellamo, comb and arrange her long hair, and listen below the surface when there is any music—"

"Ah, Necken!"* said Laxmatte. "Have the gentlemen seen all that?"

"It is as good as if we had seen it ourselves, said the students. "It is printed, and everything that is printed is true."

"Ah, Necken!" said Laxmatte again, a little contemptuously. "Then we ought to have had fine weather yesterday, for it stands in the almanac that it would be clear, but it blew and poured as if the heavens were open."

"That comes because the almanac has the privilege of fooling people, and that privilege is printed, consequently it must be true," said the students.

Laxmatte shook his head, but the fish were now done and the students ate enough for six, and treated Prince to cold meat, and Prince in his joy stood on

* The same as Neptune.

his hind legs and sneezed like a cat. When this was over, the students gave Laxmatte a bright silver mark and let him fill his pipe with superfine tobacco, and Laxmatte stuffed it so full that it burst. Then the gentlemen expressed their thanks for the good entertainment and took their departure, much regretted by Prince, who sat with melancholy looks and sneezed on the beach, as long as he could see a bit of the yacht's white sails in the distance.

Laxmaja had not uttered a word, but thought all the more. She had good ears, and had preserved every detail of the narrative in her mind. "It would be something like," said she to herself, "if one could get one of the enchanter's cows! It would be worth while to milk such a creature morning and night, and not have any trouble about her feed, but instead a shelf outside the window full of pans of milk and cream! But I am not likely to be as lucky as all that."

"What are you cogitating about?" said Laxmatte.

"Nothing in particular," answered the old woman. But in silence she pondered on some old incantations which she had heard in her childhood from an old cripple, and which could bring good luck in fishing. "What if I should try?" thought she.

It happened to be a Saturday, and on Saturday

night Laxmatte was not in the habit of setting his nets, for he knew full well that one ought not to break the Sabbath. But when twilight approached, the old woman said: "This evening we ought to set the nets."

"No," said her husband, "it never has any blessing with it to fish on the Sabbath."

"But last night it was stormy and we got so little," said Laxmaja. "This evening the sea is clear as a mirror, and with the wind we now have the herring will come."

"But there is a storm-cloud in the north-west," said the old man, "and Prince has eaten grass this afternoon."

"He hasn't been eating my leeks?" exclaimed the old woman.

"No, but there will be hard weather to-morrow at sun-down," declared Laxmatte.

"Now, see here," said his wife, "we will set just one net there on the lee-side, and then we can pack the open keg full; it isn't good for it to stand so long without being covered."

The old man allowed himself to be persuaded, and so they rowed out to the fishing-banks. When they came to the deepest water, Laxmaja began to hum the

old magic verse, changing the words to suit her hearts' wish:

"Ahti with the long beard,
Thou who livest beneath the sea,
One of your many cows give me—"

"What is that you are humming?" asked the old man.

"It is only an old song that ran in my mind," answered Laxmaja, and then she sang in a louder voice:

"Two is even, and one is odd,
Give me a cow, thou ocean god;
Then I will give thee for thy boon,
The gold of the sun and the disk of the moon."

"That is a silly song," said Laxmatte. "Is it proper to sing such things on Saturday night?"

But the old woman sang and sang, always in the same tone, as long as they were out. Laxmatte paid no further attention to it, as he sat there rowing the heavy boat, for he was thinking of his broken clay pipe and the superfine tobacco. So they came back to the rock and soon afterwards retired to rest.

Laxmatte and Laxmaja lay in their bed, but neither got a wink of sleep; one thought that he had broken the Sabbath the other thought of Ahti's cows. When

it was near midnight, the old man sat up in bed and said to his wife: "Did you hear anything?"

"No," answered the old woman.

"Seems to me that the whirligig on the roof sounds badly," said Laxmatte. "We are surely going to have a storm."

"Oh, it is only your imagination," rejoined the old woman.

Laxmatte lay down, but in a little while he straightened up again. "The whirligig creaks," said he.

"Go to sleep; you only imagine things," cried his wife. And the old man tried to sleep.

But the third time he sprang out of bed: "No, the whirligig now screeches as if it had caught fire! There is a tempest outside, and I must go and take in the nets."

Both now stepped to the door; the summer night was as dark as October, the whirligig creaked, and the storm whined round all the corners. When they came out, the great sea lay like a white sheet of snow around them in the night, and the spray rose above the roof of the fisher-cabin. Such a night Laxmatte could not remember to have seen before. To push out the boat and go to sea was not to be thought of. The old couple stood dismayed by the stoop and were

obliged to hold fast to the door-post, while the water sprinkled them in the face. "Didn't I say that there is never any blessing in fishing on Sunday!" said Laxmatte gruffly, and the old woman stood there so crestfallen and scared that she did not even think of Ahti's cows.

As nothing was to be done they went in again. Now their eyes became heavy after their wakefulness, and they slept as soundly as if no stormy sea had ever broken in fury around their solitary rock

When Laxmatte and his old woman awoke, the sun stood high in the sky, the tempest had ceased, and only the broad silver swells, glittering in the sunlight, still washed against the red cliff.

"Why, what is that?" cried Laxmaja, when she looked out of the door.

"It looks like a large barking dog," declared Laxmatte.

"As true as I live, it is a cow," exclaimed Laxmaja.

And a cow it was, a splendid red cow of the best breed, fat and healthy as if she had eaten spinach all her days. She went there so tranquilly on the beach and did not even touch the poor tufts of grass, as if she disdained such meager fare.

Laxmatte could scarcely believe his eyes, but it was

a veritable cow, so was she created, and this was soon shown when the old woman began to milk her and filled all the buckets and pans, even to the dipper, with the richest morning milk. Laxmatte in vain racked his brains to understand how she had come there, and went out to look after his lost nets. It was not long before he found them, cast up by the waves on the beach, and so full of fish that not a single mesh could be seen for the bright herring.

"It's a good thing that we have a cow," said Laxmatte, as he cleaned the fish, "but what shall we feed her on?"

"There will be some way," replied the old woman. And the cow hit upon the way herself. She waded out in the water and ate the sea-grass which grew by the shore; with this she kept herself constantly in the best condition. All except Prince thought that she was a very nice cow. Prince barked at her; he had obtained a rival.

From that day milk and cream were found in abundance on the red rock. All the nets were constantly full of fish. Laxmatte and Laxmaja became fat from good living and richer every day, for the old woman churned many pounds of butter, the old man engaged two assistants and began to fish on a large scale. The sea became to him a great receptacle from which he

could haul up as much as he pleased. And the cow continued to provide for herself. In the fall, when Laxmatte and his wife moved over to the main land, the cow went in the sea, and in the spring when they came back, she again stood on the rock.

"We need a better cabin," said Laxmaja the second summer; "the old one is now entirely too small for us and the hands."

"Yes," said Laxmatte. And so he built a nice cabin with a regular latch and a fish-shed on the rocks, and hired two hands more and fished so remarkably much that he sent many barrels of salmon, herrings and *sik* to both Russia and Sweden.

"I am all dragged out with the many hands," said Laxmaja. "It wouldn't be too much if I had a girl to help me."

"Take one," said the old man. And so they hired a servant. But then Laxmaja said:

"We have entirely too little milk for so many people. As I have a girl, she could with the same trouble attend to three cows."

"Then you can sing another song to the enchanter," said her husband a little derisively.

This provoked Laxmaja. But for all that she again rowed out one Saturday night and sang as before:

"Ahti with the long beard,
Thou who livest beneath the sea,
Three of your finest cows give me!"

The next morning three cows stood on the rock instead of one, and all of them ate sea-grass and provided for themselves like the first.

"Are you now satisfied?" said Laxmatte to his wife.

"Certainly I would be satisfied," said she, "if I only had two more girls to do the great amount of work, and a little better clothes. Haven't you heard that I am called madam?"

"Very well," said Laxmatte. So Laxmaja had several servant-girls and fine madam-clothes.

"Now it would be all right," said she, "if we had it a little better in the summer. You ought to build a large two-story house on the rock and bring soil here, so that we could have a garden. Then you ought to build a little summer-house in it, so that I could look at the sea, and then we ought to have a musician to play for us on the bass-viol in the evening, and then we ought to have a little steamboat of our own to sail to church with when it blows."

"Anything else?" said Laxmatte. And so he did all that his old woman wished. The rock Ahtola became so grand, and Laxmaja became so aristocratic

that all the cat-fish and herring in the sea were struck with wonder. Prince himself was fed on beef-steak and waffles and at last became round as a barrel.

"Are you now satisfied?" asked the old man.

"Certainly I am satisfied," said Laxmaja; "but if I only had thirty cows; it requires something for such a household."

"Go to the enchanter," said Laxmatte.

The old woman went out in her new steamboat and sang to the sea-king. The next morning thirty beautiful cows stood on the beach, and all provided for themselves.

"Do you know, husband," said Laxmaja, "I am entirely too cramped on this miserable little rock, and where can I find room for so many cows?"

"I know no other way," answered Laxmatte, "than for you to pump out the sea."

"How you talk! Who can pump out the sea?"

"Try with your new steamboat. It has a pump."

Laxmaja fully understood that her husband was fooling her, but yet she could not help thinking of it. "I can't pump out the sea," said she to herself, "but if I build a large dam, and then fill it with stones and sand, we will have our rock as large again."

The old woman loaded her new steamboat with stones, and sailed out. The musician was on board,

and played so beautifully on his bass-viol that Ahti and Wellamo and all the nymphs of the sea came up to the surface to listen to the music.

"What is that which glitters so in the waves?" asked Laxmaja.

"It is the foam of the sea, which shines in the sunlight," answered the musician.

"Throw out the stones!" cried Laxmaja.

The men in the steamboat began to cast the stones to right and left in the foam. One stone struck the nose of Wellamo's favorite maid of honor. Another grazed the cheek of the sea-queen herself. A third stone dropped near Ahti's head, and jerked off half of the sea-king's beard. There was a great commotion in the water, and the waves rose and sank as in a boiling kettle.

"Where did that gale come from?" exclaimed Laxmaja. But before she had finished speaking, the sea yawned like the jaws of a fish, and swallowed up the whole steamboat.

Laxmaja sank like a stone to the bottom, but scrabbled with her hands and feet and came up again to the surface, where she got hold of the musician's bass-viol and floated on it. At that moment she saw beside her Ahti's terrible head, and he had only half a beard.

"Why did you throw stones at me?" roared the sea-king.

"Ah! gracious sir," sighed Laxmaja, "it was a mistake. Rub bear's pomade on your beard and it will soon grow out again."

"Old woman, have I not given you all you desired, and more too?"

"Yes, certainly, gracious sir. Many thanks for the cows! They give lots of milk."

"Well, where is the gold of the sun and the moon's disk you promised me?"

"Ah, gracious sir, they have shone every day and night on the sea, when it has not been cloudy," replied Laxmaja artfully.

"I will teach you!" roared the sea-king, and gave the bass-viol a shove, so that it sent the old woman like a rocket on the beach.

There stood Prince, as starved out as before, gnawing on a crow's bone. Laxmatte sat in his ragged gray jacket alone on the stoop of the shabby old cabin, and mended a net.

"See here, mother!" said he. "Where do you come from with such force, and how is it that you are so wet?"

Laxmaja looked around her, perfectly dumbfounded, and asked: "where is our two-story house?"

"What house?" said the old man.

"Our large house and garden, and the hands and the servant-girls, and the thirty beautiful young cows, and the steamboat, and everything else."

"Now you talk in your night-cap, mother," said Laxmatte. "The students have turned your head so that you sang crazy songs last evening, and could not get to sleep until morning. There was a storm in the night, but it is now over, and I did not have the heart to wake you up, so I rowed out alone for the nets."

"But I have seen Ahti," said Laxmaja.

"You have lain in your bed and dreamed foolish things, mother, and then you went in your sleep out into the water!"

"But there is the bass-viol," said Laxmaja.

"A great bass-viol! It is only an old beam. I'll tell you what it is, wife, another time we will take good care not to set our nets on a Sabbath evening. It never has any blessing with it."

ZUDI.

THE last house at the end of the town belonged to Master Aron, the tailor. It was not large, it was not handsome, but good enough for a poor man and his little daughter; yes, so good, that there were two rooms left which they rented out, one to Corporal Stolt, he with the wooden leg, the other to Madame Flink, who took care of the sick.

Master Aron's house stood by the river, which flowed there so clear and so deep between its green banks. How pleasant it was for the poor man to look out on the glittering waves, and into the dark, luxuriant woods on the other side, as he made knots in his thread, for only then did he give himself time to look up from his work. And how healthy it was to breathe the fresh, pure air through the open window, when he was obliged to sit cooped up in the little close room the whole day. Oh, it was a blessing!

Zudi, Master Aron's daughter, was a wild young one, people said, but they forgot that no mother had watched over and instructed the little girl. Master Aron was an honest and industrious man, but he had no time to devote to Zudi, whom he nevertheless heartily loved. He sat sewing all day on the table before the window and then thought of nothing but broadcloth, thread, wax and scissors. Zudi ran around the whole day in the yard or the street, but most of all she played by the river; she enjoyed it so much in the soft, moist grass, under the green, waving willows and the beautiful alder bushes; there she played with stones and little boats, or sat gazing at the crested waves when the storm raged; she almost loved the river more, when the water roared and the waves dashed high against the shore, than when it lay calm and mirror-like, but yet she never could make up her mind about it, for certainly those were delightful moments which she spent Saturday evenings, when Master Aron took his violin and seated himself under the old willow and played his old tunes. Then Zudi lay quiet and happy at her father's feet, as near the water as possible; then she listened devoutly to the beautiful tones, and sometimes shed copious tears when Master Aron played a very sad song which went to her heart.

One lovely, warm summer afternoon, the father and daughter sat so and the last tones had just died away, when Zudi heard a soft rustling in the bushes; she rose hastily and looked over the hedge; a bit of a blue blouse and the edge of a straw hat were all she saw, and she did not trouble herself any further about it.

"Once more, papa! Once more the song about Zudi!" she begged eagerly, and Master Aron again seized the bow. Zudi hid her face among the flowers and exclaimed: "Ah, why, why is not my mamma here? then I could hear her sing!"

The whole night Zudi dreamed of the beautiful gipsy song and of her mother. When she went to the shore for water the next morning, she heard a merry uproar and laughter at a distance: "It is the street-boys," said she, and set her teeth together, which gave the little mouth a very stern and bitter expression. Soon a whole troop of ragged, unruly boys were seen at the corner of Master Aron's house. When they came under the window where the poor tailor was sewing diligently, they began to sing in a loud voice:

"Once there was a tailor
Who fiddled by the shore,
But now we've come to have a dance,
So you can play some more."

Zudi was beside herself; she threw her pitcher on the ground and started towards the boys with her little clenched fist raised: "Stop, stop!" cried she with flashing eyes, "don't laugh at him! Never laugh at papa! Yes, you can beat me, see here I am, but you shan't laugh—" the little wild girl trembled with anger as she stood there in the midst of the boys, who in the beginning, a little dismayed, remained silent, but soon mocked and made fun, thus irritating Zudi still more. Master Aron called in vain to his daughter to come in, but she did not hear him, she took up stones and threw them at her enemies, crying fiercely: "Go away, go away, thieves, beggar boys!" and when they gave her like names in return, as well as skilfully avoided the stones, she cried quickly: "Dodo!" and the next instant a tremendously large, shaggy dog stood growling at her side.

"There, Dodo!" cried Zudi, pointing to her enemies, "go at them and use your teeth!"

Dodo rushed swift as a flash upon the frightened crowd, which hastily scattered and fled in all directions into shops and gateways. When the street was empty the dog returned to his little mistress, who, caressing Dodo's shaggy head, shared her breakfast with him.

When Zudi at length came in with her water-pitcher,

Master Aron had forgotten the whole scene and did not even notice the little girl, who quietly set down the pitcher on the floor and again went out. Soon her clear, wild voice was heard at the river bank, above the roar of the waves:

"Zudi, you gipsey girl,
Zudi, Zudi, oh my Zu—di!"

sang she and threw one stone after the other into the water; her black hair floated in the wind and lay in restless, disordered locks around the little brown face. Suddenly she heard a mild voice close beside her.

"What little gipsey girl are you?"

"Yes, a gipsey girl am I, and so was my mother," said Zudi defiantly and climbed nimbly as a squirrel up in the willow tree, where she remained sitting silent, regarding the stranger with shy glances, without answering a single question.

"Come down then, child, and talk to me," urged the stranger, kindly. "I am a poor sick man who sits here by the river to regain his strength, you need not be afraid of me. Where do you live? Have you a father? Come down, and I will tell you something; I have a little boy as large as you are . . . come down."

But Zudi sat motionless high up in the tree, and when the stranger came a few steps nearer, she quickly broke off a dry branch and made herself ready to throw it down on the sick man's head. The latter slowly walked away, shaking his head sadly. When Zudi fancied him sufficiently far off, she descended from her elevated place of retreat and continued her play. It began to be warm, the sun stood high in the heavens; Zudi took off her clothes and plunged into the deep, foaming water. There she seemed to be almost as much at home as on land, and allowed herself to rise and sink with the waves; sometimes she disappeared entirely for a few seconds, and then Dodo, who sat on the bank, raised his brown eyes attentively and looked anxiously at the spot where the little black head had last been visible; but when Zudi again popped up in another place, Dodo laid himself back in the grass and sighed calmly. When Zudi grew tired of this sport she ascended the bank, wrung the water from her long hair and put on her clothes, after which she began to dance before Dodo, snapping her fingers and singing her wild songs in a high, shrill voice to words which no one understood.

"There dances the poor wild child," said the neighbors and shook their wise heads compassionately.

but not a single one attempted to tame the little savage.

One day Dodo had been frolicking with his little mistress quite a long time and stretched himself weary in the grass; Zudi lay down beside him with her head on the faithful friend's shaggy breast, and so they both fell asleep. Shortly afterwards a little boy with a bundle was seen at Master Aron's door. He found it closed and knocked; no one opened it; then he perceived the girl and the dog and approached them: he stood a moment, looking at the slumbering friends: the girl slept calmly, except that she sometimes snapped her fingers gently, and the dog growled, he was probably dreaming of some other dog who tried to rob him of a good bone. The boy softly touched the sleeping girl: Zudi rose immediately, fully awake, but when she saw the boy, she took up a stone. Dodo also sat up and looked intelligently at his mistress as if he meant to say: "I am ready when you command."

"How can I find the tailor?" asked the boy. "The door is closed, and I can't get in."

"Are you a street-boy?" inquired Zudi, without answering his question.

"No, I am not," answered the boy, smiling quietly.

Zudi regarded him distrustfully, and still kept the stone for the sake of security.

"Then you are—the sick gentleman's boy; he who sits here every day and looks at the river so as to get strong?"

"Yes, my papa is sick, and is in the habit of sitting by the river."

Zudi slowly dropped the stone on the ground.

"Perhaps you are the tailor's daughter?" said the boy.

"Yes, I am."

"Then perhaps you can tell me how to get in? Papa sent me with a vest which is to be altered."

"Oh, no one can get in now," answered Zudi hastily; "papa is sick; he is lying down to have a little sleep. No, no one can go in."

"Then he is not able to work either."

"Oh yes, he has no time to be sick, he says; in the morning when the sun rises he already sits at the table. Give me the bundle and I will hand it to him. As you are not a street-boy, you can rely upon me."

The boy smiled: "You do not like street-boys?"

"They are my worst enemies, my greatest foes," replied Zudi, again taking up the stone, as if to have it in readiness.

"Perhaps you do them harm too?"

"You had better believe it!" said Zudi, with flashing eyes; "I do all that I can: beat them with poles, throw stones at them, and in a case of necessity, Dodo here is my friend—he has good teeth, I can tell you."

Zudi passed her little brown hand over Dodo's large nose, and opened his mouth so as to show the sharp teeth. The boy regarded with astonishment and almost fright, the little wild girl, who with her large black shining eyes looked at him in return.

"I must go now; good-bye!"

"Good-bye! Will you come for the work when it is done?"

"Yes."

Master Aron had just finished his work; he had sewed the last button on the vest, and now folded it carefully, after he had first removed all the bits of thread and dust from it. Zudi had, contrary to habit, remained in-doors all day, only to wait for this moment.

"Now you can go home with it," said Master Aron.

"No, papa, he is coming for it himself."

"What! that fine gentleman?"

"No, the boy."

"Ah! Well, it wouldn't have surprised me if he had come himself; he has been here once before under my roof."

"When, father?"

"One day. I can't remember when it was; he asked if you were my daughter, and talked of many things with me."

Zudi sat curled up in a corner, rocking herself gently to and fro; she nodded and smiled, after which she took the vest and stole out. High up in the willow tree she awaited the boy's arrival, as she sang and swung herself on the pliant branches. At last she perceived the boy on the bank.

"Why do you sit up there? Come down!"

Zudi obeyed.

"I intended to call you, but I did not know your name."

"My name is Zudi."

"Zudi? What a remarkable name!"

"There was once a tailor—

sounded at that instant quite near. Zudi became crimson, and sent a shower of pebbles over the hedge. A laugh from several voices was the answer. Zudi called to Dodo; he did not hear her, and the street-boys seemed to know this, for they came so near to

Zudi that she for the first time was obliged tc flee and take refuge up in the tall willow, but the boys were expert, they aimed well, and already several stones had hit Zudi, whose thin dress did not protect her from the pain; the strange boy at first stood irresolute, but when he saw how Zudi in vain sought the shelter of the thickest branches, he sprang forward, placed himself in the midst of the assailants, and cried: "Fie, boys! a whole crowd against a little girl! Are you not ashamed?"

"Oh, it is a wild-cat," answered the boys.

"May be, yet for all that she is one against ten."

"But nothing hurts her," said one of the number.

"And she does not beg us to stop," said another.

"Never will I beg you, never!" screamed Zudi. "Oh, if I only had Dodo here!"

"Boys," began Zudi's defender, "go home like good fellows, and leave her in peace."

"Who are you, I'd like to know?" asked one of the boys mockingly.

My name is Arvid Ruth. There now, will you go?"

The boys began to whisper: "Ruth; that is the name of the man who paid my mother's debts."

"And he who rented a room for grandmother was called Ruth too."

"This boy was along when Herr Ruta went to the hospital with father, after he fell down in the mine."

"Come away; we mustn't do him any harm."

"Yes, come; we will leave that wild-cat alone."

They raised their ragged caps a little and set off at full speed up the street. Zudi was down in an instant; she sprang to Arvid and pressed a kiss on the edge of his Spanish cape: "You have helped me, Arvid, I will *never* forget it."

"Yes, I was really afraid that they would injure you very much."

"Oh, they didn't have time to do me much harm—only this," said Zudi, pointing to some large bruises on her arms and feet.

"You are a strange girl!" said Arvid.

"Strange? Yes, so they called mamma too. I will tell you something; she was a gipsey, and could sing and play and dance; so can I. She sang one song that was so pretty; it was about a gipsey girl, who was called Zudi; that is where I got the name."

"Can you do nothing else but sing and dance?" asked Arvid.

"Oh yes, I can throw a stone way out there to the rocks, and climb up in the highest trees, and swim like a fish, and jump over the fence, and run almost as fast as Dodo."

"Would you not like to learn something else, something which little girls are accustomed to do?"

"I don't know what little girls are accustomed to do."

"They read and sew and knit. Wouldn't you like to learn such things?"

Zudi shook her head: "I do not know."

"I will speak to my papa; he always knows what is best."

"Do it."

"Good-bye, Zudi!"

"Good-bye!—Wait—do you know—that song which—the street-boys sang?"

"No."

"That is good—but Arvid—" Zudi seized the boy's hand and held it tight in hers: "if you ever learn it, then *never* sing it before papa—remember that—for then—then *I will have to* set Dodo on you too, or throw stones at you. Promise me this."

"Certainly, Zudi! It is wrong to make fun of anybody."

"You are not a street-boy, I see that!" cried Zudi, with beaming eyes. "Go, go, Arvid, I will not forget you."

There came a time when people talked about the wild Zudi more than ever: a gentleman had placed her at school, had given her new clothes and a little room of her own; she was allowed to eat at his table and play with his son. They wondered how the new clothes would look when Zudi climbed up in the trees; they wondered whether her playfellow would not soon be killed by the stones thrown by Zudi's practised hand, or her schoolmates bitten by Dodo's sharp teeth; they wondered for a time and then became silent, Zudi was forgotten. Not even the street-boys recognised the little well-dressed girl, who quietly and seriously walked to the large white school-house. Her black hair no longer fluttered in the wind, but was arranged in thick, smooth braids under her little hat; she had neither sticks nor stones in her hands, but a little satchel full of books and pamphlets.

As far as her playmate was concerned, he was very much pleased with his little new sister, and liked to play with her by the river or sit in Master Aron's low room and see how the old tailor stuck his needle up and down and talked to himself. On Saturday afternoons they sat out doors, listening to Master Aron's violin, when he played his pretty songs, until one mild May evening, when Master Aron, while he was play-

ing Zudi's song, gently dropped the bow and fell asleep—a sleep so deep—that he never more awoke.

Zudi now plays the violin herself and sings her favorite song about "Zudi," but it does not sound so wild as before; her voice is soft and clear and the tones float far, far away over the glittering waves, far away to the other shore, where the birds in the leafy wood answer with their glad twitter.

OLD MAN WINTER.

IN nature's great kingdom a change full of significance had occurred. It was as if the whole world were expecting the arrival of a king. Every window was filled with flowers, the roads likewise; every stem, every leaf, the very branches of the trees, which had just stood there so cold and bare, had now taken on a shining and glittering garment of the most beautiful silver.

The brook still murmured, and hopped merrily around in its bed, as before.

But on the road a little man was seen coming along, enveloped in a large gray fur cloak. He wore great warm over-shoes on his feet, and on his hands woollen gloves, which were well lined. Over his head he had drawn a hood which hung fast to the cloak. Around his brow he wore a beautiful wreath, composed only of icicles. His beard was perfectly white and icy.

He went to the brook, which slackened its course,

when it, surprised, became aware of the strange figure. The latter bound the little brook and silvered the fetters with a cold smile.

It was Herr Winter himself, who now came to make his visit to us. As no one else cared to decorate his path and strew it with flowers, he did it himself; he was well provided besides, for with every breath he drew, there straightway became a whole garden around him, full of the most beautiful flowers and with beds where the flowers lay in high heaps.

But they were all of one color; they did not parade, as his brother Summer's, in all conceivable hues, they were only white. . . But the old man liked such; white flowers were his fancy.

It was plain to be seen that the new guest was not particularly welcome where he went, for all persons looked at him sidewise, and almost shivered at the sight of him, and wherever he made his appearance, on street or square, strewing his flowers about him in his well-meaning, they tried to drive him away, not with sword or pistol—but with brooms. And if he took a little peep into any house, they were ready directly to make up large fires in the chimney-places, although they knew that he could not bear anything of the kind on account of his dear flowers, which, in

contradistinction to Summer's, could on no condition endure warmth.

One evening—it was Christmas eve, humanity's greatest holiday—wherever he looked, lights twinkled at him from the windows. He only heard laughter and gladness.

"Now I have given the children of earth such an acceptable gift, they are all so delighted at it, and so rejoice in their minds that they must certainly receive me somewhere, and grant me, if not more, at least a portion of their love."

So he murmured, but whenever he knocked, they immediately closed the door against him, so that he was obliged to stay out alone in the cold night.

On another evening in his solitary wanderings, he suddenly heard singing and magnificent music from the largest ball-room in the city. He looked up at the window and saw them dancing. He placed himself at the entrance, an immense number of people streamed in there, all clad in the most varied and unlike costumes. He heard them say that there was a masquerade ball up in the saloon.

"They will think that I am in disguise," said he to himself; "my costume is perfectly exquisite. I shall only take off my large over-shoes."

He did as he said, and soon stood in knee-breeches, stockings and pumps.

He noticed a young and beautiful lady who came entirely alone. He offered her his arm, so as to be in company with some one. She accepted his offer very graciously. The beautiful lady was Pleasure, the most distinguished dame at the ball, and the one most thought of, for she was never annoyed or offended in any way, but the most satisfied with everything.

To be sure, it seemed to her that her cavalier's arm felt rather cold, but what did she care for that? She was never accustomed to freeze, even in the most severe weather, as she, in the midst of the hottest summer, was never oppressed by the heat.

Now, Old Man Winter believed that they would not be able to deny him entrance. He was vastly mistaken! A bearded gentleman, a door-keeper, I think, stood at the door and had a large staff in his hand. He bowed in the politest manner to the lady, but roared fiercely to Old Man Winter:

"You have nothing to do in there—but, if you choose, you can peep in through the windows."

Herr Winter was obliged to go this time too. It made him feel bad, however, for, to tell the truth, he had taken a little fancy to Dame Pleasure.

He began his walk again, and so came to a little,

dilapidated cabin. Here it seemed to him that it was almost inviting. He stepped in. The old couple, a peasant and his wife, sat at their humble meal, crooning and trembling with the cold.

They were sick—the poor old couple—they had the ague, and it became worse when Old Man Winter came in, and they, hospitable, as they were wont to be, reached him the hand, and asked him to sit down and partake of their simple repast.

Old Man Winter did not thrive here, however. He wished to go, in order to see how the peasant couple's two little children were getting along out in the thick, dark forest, where they had gone to fetch wood. He soon found them, as they stood together in full occupation. He desired to give them a present, the handsomest he had, one of his bouquets of flowers, which he himself thought so much of, and therefore believed that others also valued. So he breathed deeply—and lo! he actually covered the two children with flowers of the most varied forms, but all white as a shroud.

Then he approached the children and pressed a kiss on each of their cheeks. He already liked them so much, and wished to show some gratitude for their parents' hospitality to him.

The children leaned their heads down, they seemed

to rest so softly among the strange old man's flowers. They soon fell asleep. Winter stood by them still, regarding them with tenderness, and still breathing flowers over them continually, yet more flowers, until at last they were completely covered with them.

Old Man Winter sat down beside them, to watch over their slumber, so that they might not be surprised by any wild beast.

But the old folks in the cottage—the children's parents, thought that their darlings stayed out entirely too long. They therefore went to look for them. In their search they came across their guest.

"Help us to find our children!" they begged of him.

He smiled, and showed them his heap of flowers with delight.

"They lie there," said he.

The old couple turned pale.

"Here, in the snow-drift?" asked they, anxiously.

"Yes, just here, in my flower-bank."

They brushed away the snow which he called his flowers. Deep down in it they found their children, who lay with their heads toward each other and slept, as pale as the bed in which they rested. A blissful smile was on their lips. They had surely dreamed that an angel from heaven kissed them. It

was no dream, but a reality. They were dead, and their little hearts now slumbered in God the Father's bosom.

When the parents saw this, they became greatly troubled; with tears and threats they accused Old Man Winter of having thrown snow-drifts over their little ones, so that they had frozen to death.

When he tried to defend himself they drove him away with blows and hard words, demanding that he should leave them in peace; he had done them so much harm when he took from them their only joy and hope.

Old Man Winter went away with heavy steps, deploring people's ingratitude. When he thought he was doing well, they cursed him. He had now to begin his wandering again, but wherever he went they drove him away, complaining aloud over his persecutions.

He went farther and farther. He became, in the end, very weak and feeble, for the journey was tiresome, and he was also thinking of his little son—the tender Spring. He came one day up in a garret chamber. A bard lived there with his wife, and a little child that they had adopted. The little one had long constituted their only joy. When the bard played on his harp, the little one listened so attentively

and manifested the greatest delight. This was no other than Spring—Winter's heir.

Old Man Winter came here in the garret, the bard touched the strings of the lyre which rested on his knee. The child reached out its hands to its father and smiled. The old man approached the cradle where the little one lay, but it seemed as if he shrank more and more together . . . and in the end all that remained of him by the cradle was a little *snow-drop*. The Spring, who in his turn grew rapidly and became large, took this snow-drop and fastened it on the bard's lyre. He then opened the window, commenced a glad song, and hastened out in the world. . . .

The bard keeps the snow-drop, for so long as he has that, there is still Spring in his thoughts, stil. melody in his tones, still freedom in his song.

A CHRISTMAS STORY.

ON the corner of Jacob's lane and Packatorg street in Stockholm, stood in 1822, and until a few years ago, a low, crooked, and very dilapidated red house, one story in height, which was very near its ruin, for the corners had sunk considerably into the ground.

This house was occupied by several families, all belonging to the unfortunate class of poor called "pauvres honteux." There lived a couple of single ladies who sewed gloves, and whose father had been a civil officer. There lived a minister's widow with her little son; she worked for the linen stores. But it would carry us too far to enumerate all these poor toilers for clothing and food, who, silent and pale, struggled with their trials within these old and crumbling walls. We will only speak of those who occupied the lower floor.

When you opened the gate and found yourself in a

large paved gateway, you had one door to the right and another to the left. The left door led to a little room with windows looking out upon Packatorg street. This room was rented by a young artist. Fatherless and motherless, poor, without friends, without protectors, the youth dragged forth a joyless life. Yet it is not to him we direct ourselves, but to the occupants on the right hand. On opening the brown door you found yourself in a small room without a fireplace and divided in the middle by a screen. On the other side of the screen was a sort of kitchen, which through this partition was hidden from the sight of those who entered. Adjoining this was a large corner room, with dark walls, heavy rafters in the ceiling and two windows, one fronting on Jacob's lane and the other on Packatorg street.

Here lived, in 1822, the widow Tollin. Her husband had been collector in the Custom-House and originally very well off; but he was one of that kind of people who never refuse to assist their friends, and this contributed to give him a large number of so-called friends, who all more or less appealed to his serviceableness, but who also abused it. When he died and left a wife and two children after him, their inheritance consisted of debts and a pension of sixty-six thalers and thirty-two shillings yearly. The

creditors bought in, at the auction after his decease, sufficient for the widow to furnish one room. This and her small pension was thus all that she and her two girls had to live upon.

The husband's many friends had disappeared at the hour of trial like chaff before the wind, and there she now stood deserted and alone, with sorrow in her heart and a dark future full of anxiety before her eyes. The solution of her life became work. And work she did, the poor woman, who all alone had to take care of two unprovided children, of whom the elder was ten and the younger eight years old when her husband left her. At the time of our story, four years had elapsed since the death of collector Tollin.

It was Christmas eve. In the gable windows of the little red house shone lights, and it could be seen that each and all according to their small resources tried to celebrate the great holiday; but no ray of light penetrated through the cracks of the closed window shutters at Fru Tollin's. The large inner room was dimly lighted by a small bit of tallow candle, which with its pale glimmer was not able to spread more than a half twilight in the cold and dismal abode. By the wall at the left stood a bed, upon which lay a woman of about forty-eight. She was dressed, and seemed to have slumbered under an attack of violent

fever, for she breathed quick and short. Curled up on the opposite sofa, with a table before it on which burned the candle, sat two girls who yet belonged to childhood. One of them was fourteen, the other twelve years of age. The elder had a dazzling white complexion, blonde hair and a pair of large, earnest, thoughtful blue eyes. The younger was darker; her hair and her whole appearance had something thick and undeveloped which made her at the first glance appear homely, but upon looking more closely at these features one thought: "She will perhaps be good looking, when she grows up."

This was, however, something which did not in the least concern the poor children, as they sat there so troubled, talking in a whisper.

"Mercy! how cold it is here!" said the younger, "and no wood and scarcely any food over the holidays. Poor mamma, she has the ague again, and no money for medicine! Do you know, Anna, this is terrible!"

She hid her face, weeping, in her hands.

"It was a great misfortune that mamma could not sell the cushions on which she had worked so hard night and day. Now we have nothing to live on. Ah! Marie, when mamma awakes, how she will cry again!" and now Anna's tears also fell abundantly,

but her grief was more still and quiet than her sister's. Marie twined her arms around Anna's neck, and both wept, leaning against each other. Suddenly Marie raised herself and said with a childish, visionary smile in the midst of her tears:

"Just think if there should be a good spirit, who made up a blazing fire on the hearth and set the tea-table before the bed, with bread and lights, by the time mamma awoke and the fever was over, do you not think that she would be very glad?"

"Yes, that she surely would," answered Anna with a sad smile, while she put her little white hands under her arms to warm them.

"And think how beautiful it would be to sit before the fire and drink coffee with fresh bread, and then eat the warm Christmas pudding! Do you remember, when papa lived, how many lights and fine Christmas gifts he and mamma used to give us, besides all those we received from papa's friends?"

"It was very different then from now," sighed Anna. "Then mamma did not have to sit up half the night, and I never saw her cry—now she cries all the time."

"Poor, poor mamma! And we who have nothing to gladden her with! Oh! if I only had as much as the large doll was worth, which I received five years

ago from aunt Ankarkrona! Now we have nothing, nothing at all."

Marie again began to cry; but all at once sh wiped away her tears, jumped down from the sofa and went on the tips of her toes to a little cupboard that stood in one of the corners, and took from it a little object which was carefully enveloped in an old handkerchief. She tripped lightly back to the table, undid the handkerchief and took out an old-fashioned, but very artistically made doll-bureau of mahogany, inlaid with pearl and gilt—a real little masterpiece. She placed it on the table and regarded the beautiful thing with admiration.

"Isn't it pretty?" asked Marie.

"Yes, indeed it is. Do you remember what the good old aunt Ankarkrona said, when she gave it to you?"

"Very well. She said: 'That little bureau was once my mother's. I have kept it as a relic; but as I have no children myself, I will give it to you, Marie, as I have stood godmother to you. See that you keep it as a memento from the old godmother, and always remember how dear it has been to me.'"

"Yes, so she said, and three weeks later she died, the sweet old lady; she who was always so kind towards us and mamma."

"Yes indeed, she was the only person who cared for us after papa's death."

"Do you know why she did so?" asked Anna, and fastened her large blue eyes upon her sister.

"Because she loved us."

"Ah yes, that is true; but, you see, she was not rich herself, and therefore did not feel ashamed of us when we became poor. She knew how hard it was to suffer want."

"Are the rich ashamed of knowing those who have become poor, when they could not help their misfortune?"

"They regard it as a disgrace, or at least they do not want to know anything about it."

"Is it a disgrace to be poor?"

"So it seems . . . Oh, how I freeze! Poor, poor mamma!"

Anna's for a moment suspended tears again began to flow, but Marie gave a little decisive jerk with her head, kissed the little bureau and whispered:

"You good godmother up there in heaven, you will not be angry with me?"

A tear rolled down upon the treasure, and then she took an old shawl, worn and thin, wrapped it around her shoulders and hid the little bureau under her arm, saying:

"I will run over to the snuff-store."

"Marie, Marie! what shall you do there?" asked Anna, raising her head.

"Hush, you shall know when I come back!"

Marie smiled through her tears. Then she stole out of the room and through the porch. Outside this she stopped, drew out the pretty little gift which she had received from her beloved godmother, kissed and fondled it, as if it had been able to feel her caresses, while she murmured through her sobs:

"Dear godmother, do not be angry with me for what I am doing—for God has said that we shall love our parents above all else in the world;" and now the little girl lifted her head and looked up at the heavens. The sky was cloudy and black as night, but just as she, in the pain of her deeply-felt sacrifice, raised her eyes to the vast space, a star peeped forth and twinkled for a moment, so clear and sparkling, down upon the child from the murky firmament. Marie smiled and nodded to the star as if to thank it. She believed that it was her godmother, who through the star gave consent to her act. Once more she kissed the bureau, and hurried across the street to the opposite corner, where the little snuff-store was located. There were sold milk, cream and bread, cut wood, which was bought by the bundle, burnt and ground coffee,

which was bought by the measure, besides snuff, tobacco, soap and other articles belonging to a similar trade.

Marie opened the door and went into the little variety store, which could be said to derive its support entirely through the poor. But what Marie did not imagine, when she tripped across the street, was that she, in her struggle before the porch, had had a witness, who had heard her sobs and the words she had uttered.

"Good evening, mamsell!" said Marie to the proprietress of the snuff-store, a fat old woman with a good-hearted face.

"Ah! is it you, little Marie; you come to get some Christmas biscuit, I suppose? I have just now got some fresh ones from the baker. What shall it be?"

"Ah! dear kind Mamsell Rundqvist," stammered Marie, with tears in her throat, "the fact is mamma could not dispose of her cushions and—and—and—" The blood, the child's proud blood, burned in the little girl's down-cast brow; she had not power to speak out.

"Yes, yes, and mamma has no money, I suppose," said Mamsell Rundqvist, with an air that was no longer friendly, and a tone that was pretty sharp

"That is bad, but I will tell you, Marie, that I had reckoned upon being paid for the bread you have bought, and I can no longer give you anything on credit. I do not keep a store to feed gratis all the baggage in the neighborhood, I can tell you—I—"

"Hush!" cried Marie, and clasped Mamsell Rundqvist's arm with both hands, while a gleam of indignation flashed from the child's eyes, but it died away instantly, and a flood of tears streamed down her cheeks.

"I do not come to ask mamsell to give me anything on credit; no, I come to ask if you would not buy this?" and Marie drew forth her little bureau. "Good Mamsell Rundqvist! buy it and I shall be so thankful. I have received it from a godmother whom I loved so much, and dearly, dearly, would I like to keep it as a remembrance from her; but mamma is sick and—" Marie had spoken under smothered sobs.

"Hm! hm!" said Mamsell Rundqvist, and looked at the little girl with a glance full of contrition and good-will; for it made her sorry to see the poor child. "What do you wish for the pretty little thing?"

"As much as I can have," whispered Marie with a glowing blush.

Had a close observer looked at the child's face, he

could there have read all the painful feelings of humiliation and grief which this scene called forth.

Mamsell Rundqvist turned the little antique bureau between her hands, and looked with attention at the beautiful work.

"I will give you two thalers; are you satisfied with that?"

"Yes," whispered Marie, almost inaudibly; for she regretted to be obliged, for two poor thalers, to sacrifice a souvenir which was so precious to her heart. Perhaps this suffering was too deeply imprinted upon her features; for Mamsell Rundqvist said as she handed Marie the money:

"When you are able to buy back the little bureau, you can do so; I do not intend to sell it."

"Thanks! thanks!" faltered Marie, wiping away her tears, while a radiant smile lighted up her face.

Then she began to buy what was necessary, so as to have it somewhat cosy on Christmas eve, when the mother should awake from her sleep. She bounded home with light steps, carrying a little armful of wood, three candles, a little coffee, bread and cream. When she had safely deposited all this in the outer room, she opened the door and signed to Anna to come out with the light.

Then she showed her sister all the treasures she

had gained, while she hopped around the room, glad and happy at the thought of her mother's surprise.

"And do you see, I have yet a whole thaler left. Now I shall go to old Lisette out in the yard, and ask her to bring us some pudding for supper for sixteen pence; and while I attend to this, you kindle the fire and then we will make the coffee." Saying this she opened the door, but gave a faint cry; for she stumbled over some person in the dark.

"Pardon me, Marie, but I came to ask if I could borrow a piece of candle," said a mild voice, apparently that of a youth.

"Goodness! how frightened I was! it is only Herr André."

"Yes, certainly it is I; but as I am entirely without money or light, I turn to you to borrow one, so that I shall not have to sit in the dark. The time would then become too long."

Marie went in, took one of the three candles she had bought with the painfully obtained money, and said in a somewhat timid voice:

"Will you not come in to us, Herr André, when mamma awakes, and drink coffee with us, for you see, it is I who invite, and I may well be allowed to do so, when you are so kind as to teach me drawing?"

"Nc, little Marie, that I cannot do," stammered the youth.

But Marie went up to him in the dark and laid her hand upon his arm with the words:

'Oh yes, Herr André, you will do it, else I should be very, very sorry," and without waiting for his answer she hastened down in the yard to speak to Lisette.

While the above-described scene took place, another was transpiring in the snuff-store. After Marie had left with the necessaries that were to keep them from freezing and going hungry to bed on Christmas eve, a gentleman entered Mamsell Rundqvist's. She was yet examining the little bureau, but put it aside immediately and looked inquiringly at the stranger.

He was a tall, dark-complexioned man, enveloped in a large mantle with a cape, a style worn at that time.

He asked for some tobacco; but when the purchase was made, he took up the little bureau which stood on the counter and asked:

"Is this for sale?"

"No, sir, it does not exactly belong to me, and is not here for sale."

"To whom does it belong?"

"To a widow's daughter, who has left it in my care."

"That is a pity, I would have liked to buy it. Where does the widow live?"

"There, right opposite; but I can assure you that she will not sell it, for you see, I have in a certain sense bought the bureau, with the promise to let her buy it back."

"But if I give you ten thalers, then the poor girl will get for it far more than it is worth, and make a clear gain," said the man in the mantle, taking out a ten thaler bill.

Mamsell Rundqvist, as a shopkeeper, thought this was altogether too large a profit to refuse, and could never imagine that a dead thing was of so much value to any human heart, that the advantage of being paid for it double what it was worth would not balance the pain of its loss. Consequently she did not hesitate a moment, but thought:

"Let the foolish man have the doll-bureau; little Marie is decidedly better off with eight thalers added to the one she has left than with that little plaything." With this the purchase was concluded.

"You will give the little girl what is left of the money, after you have taken out what is due you?" inquired the gentleman.

"Yes, sir, you can be sure that she shall get every shilling; but as you are in the way of buying Christmas presents, perhaps those two cushions which Fru Tollin has embroidered and not been able to sell might please you; and then, sir, you would be doing a great benefit to the poor widow at the same time."

"Where does she live?"

"Right across the street, in the little red house, to the right of the entrance."

"I will tell one of my acquaintances, who I heard was in want of some Christmas presents for a relative; perhaps he will buy them. Thank you for the information," said the stranger, as he raised his hat and disclosed rich black hair, which curled around a high and broad white forehead.

Anna had in the meantime arranged the humble tea-table and placed the coffee-pot on the fire. When Marie again entered, the mother awoke, rose with a heavy head and looked astonished at the cheerful fire and the table with its lighted candles. She passed her hand over her forehead and shut her eyes with a sigh, as if she had regarded what she saw as a dream, which she wished to dispel; but when she again

opened her eyes, both of her children stood at the bedside.

Anna seized one of her hands and Marie the other, and both asked:

"How is it, dear mamma? has the fever gone away?"

"Children, I do not know how it is with me, but it seems as if the room was lighted up, and as if we had a fire burning on the hearth. It is certainly the remains of the delirium; for I remember clearly how destitute we are, my poor, poor children."

"Beloved mamma, it is not a fancy," said Marie, and covered her mother's hand with kisses. "I have procured some money. Now we will drink our coffee, and then we will have the Christmas pudding, and to-morrow we will have some steak. Ah! do not look so surprised and so anxious, dear mamma; I have got the money from Mamsell Rundqvist."

"You have borrowed it of her?" The mother's eyes were filled with tears.

"Yes, I have borrowed it. Do not look so sorrowful; she said that I might owe it to her until I could work it out. Oh! mamma, how pleasant we will now have it, if that ugly fever was only over!" And Marie took her mother's hand and laid it on her head. The little girl did not wish to tell her mother that she had procured them a little warmth, light and

food, at the sacrifice of the dearest she possessed. No, this she should know afterwards.

The widow pressed her daughters to her breast, and said softly:

"God, who has tried me so hard, has yet been merciful in giving me such good children."

"But we are not half as good as we ought to be," whispered Anna, caressing her mother's hand.

"Do you feel better?" asked Marie.

"Yes, the fever is gone, and now I will get up," said Fru Tollin.

Half an hour later the poor widow with her two children sat at the tea-table. The little girls had fixed up the bed, and the humble room looked quite trim and cheerful. Some one now knocked at the door.

"It is Herr André," said Marie. "I have invited him," she added with a child's glad satisfaction, "for the poor young man has had no light, and Lisette said that he hadn't any wood either, and that she knew for certain that he had not eaten a mouthful today, and so I thought that we could share with one who has still less than we."

While she was talking, Anna had gone to open the door, but came back with quite precipitate steps, saying:

"There is a gentleman who asks for mamma;" and at the same moment a tall, slender man, in a fur cloak, entered the room.

"I beg pardon, madam," said he in a clear and melodious voice, "but I am told that a Fru Tollin has a pair of embroidered cushions for sale, and I should like to see them."

Fru Tollin, who had that polished and refined manner which neither poverty nor misfortune can take away from a well-bred person, asked the stranger to be seated, and showed him two beautiful and finely embroidered cushions.

In the meantime the young girls had drawn back towards the hearth, from whence they examined the stranger.

He had a proud figure, with a pale face, high forehead, black curly hair, and a pair of eyes as dark as night. His whole appearance betokened strong and powerful feelings, as well as past conflicts with bitter suffering.

"What is the price of the cushions?" asked the gentleman, who looked more at the girls than the beautiful work.

"I had hoped to receive twenty thalers apiece," replied Fru Tollin, with the humility which proud souls feel when they are obliged to depend upon others.

"In my opinion, madam, this is altogether too little, and I fear that fifty thalers is not enough for the two."

So saying he laid the sum on the table, and asked permission to call for them after half an hour.

"Are these little girls your daughters?" inquired he, approaching the children.

"Yes, they are the only riches God has spared me."

The stranger asked their names, smiled at Anna and patted her on the head, after which he took his leave, while Fru Tollin uttered some words of gratitude for the liberal manner in which he had paid for her work.

When he was gone, Marie clasped her sister around the waist and began to dance about the room; then she hugged and embraced her mother, and begged for two thalers to go back to the store and pay Mamsell Rundqvist, and then hurried away to redeem the present of her beloved godmother. As she passed by Herr André's door she knocked, and asked him to step in to her mother, who with the coffee waited for him.

"Mamsell Rundqvist," exclaimed Marie, when she entered the store, "here are two thalers; mamma has sold her cushions, and now I can have back my darling bureau."

"No, little Marie, that you cannot, as I sold it an hour ago."

"Sold! sold godmother's souvenir! Oh, no, Mamsell Rundqvist, you are only joking, for did you not promise me that I could buy it back?" Marie's eyes were full of tears.

"Yes, and I meant it besides, but, you see, little Marie, I had an opportunity to sell it to your advantage, for I got ten thalers, and I have thus eight to give you; I will not take anything for my trouble, which would otherwise be some three pence on the thaler, amounting to thirty pence, but I think a good deal of you, and therefore—What in the wide world, child, I believe actually that you are crying! Why, what a little goose, to cry when you get ten thalers, though you were willing to sell it for two!"

But Marie did not hear what she said; she had sat down on a large bundle of brooms and cried, only cried.

"Dear child," said Mamsell Rundqvist, going to her, "you are a big girl now and ought not to cry over playthings. Take your eight thalers prettily and thank God for them; do you not know that you once wanted to sell the little thing?"

'Yes, to you, mamsell, who I thought would always let me buy it back again, and when mamma was without fire and food; but now—Oh dear!—if I only

had godmother's little bureau again! Now I shall have no peace in my soul."

So sobbed the poor child, but then Mamsell Rundqvist told her that she had asked the gentleman to buy her mother's cushions, and that he had promised to direct an acquaintance to their house. Now she believed that it was that same acquaintance who had bought the cushions.

Marie dried her tears and returned home considerably richer, but yet considerably sadder.

Young André was with Fru Tollin. He was a youth of twenty-two, with a countenance that was more poetic than handsome, pale, and with the melancholy expression in every feature, which want engenders. His clothing was old and worn, but carefully brushed, his linen white, though coarse. There was in the whole exterior of the youth an apparent endeavor to preserve a good appearance during his hard battle with adversity.

Marie walked in silently and took her place at the table, without saying a word.

"What is the matter, child?" asked her mother.

"Mamsell Rundqvist made me feel a little cross, but it is over now," answered Marie, and tried to smile at her mother.

The poor artist spent his evening with the little

family, and Lisette was commissioned by Marie to buy wood and make up a fire in his room, while he was in with them. Besides this, Marie gave Lisette a thaler to buy coffee and food for him during the holidays.

The thought that she could afford the young man this surprise, and that she could give Lisette all of twelve shillings, seemed to console her somewhat for the painful loss, which had nevertheless afforded her this enjoyment.

When Herr André took leave, after having partaken of the humble repast with mother and daughters, Fru Tollin pressed him to accept as a loan from her a couple of thalers. This service the poor widow offered with so much tact, that he could not say no, although his pride suffered in receiving assistance from those who had so little themselves.

When the two girls had gone to rest, Marie twined her arm around her sister's neck, and told her in a whisper the whole circumstance of the bureau, as well as her grief when she had thought that it was lost to her for ever.

"Do not cry," replied Anna, kissing her sister's brow; "and do not think that Aunt Ankerkrona looks down from heaven with anger upon you. No, Marie, your act was an inspiration of your good heart, and

like all other good deeds has borne its fruit. God saw your sacrifice and allowed it to become the basis of the aid we have received. Through it the stranger saw the dear little bureau, and this led Mamsell Rundqvist to speak of mamma's cushions, which in this way found a purchaser, so that we are helped out of our worst trouble. You see, my sister, God always lets the recompense follow a noble sacrifice, just as mamma has said. Let us therefore thank Him in a warm prayer."

And the two children joined in a prayer as trusting and grateful as any that ever ascended from pure and pious hearts.

Who knows but what Marie would once more, and with still greater cause, have to bless God for this sacrifice?

So ended the first Christmas eve.

Five years lay between the foregoing and the Christmas eve of 1827.

The sun shone down bright and clear upon the snow-covered streets. The hurried pedestrians, the swiftly passing sleighs, the crowded street-stands, the well-filled stores, everything showed that Christmas

eve was at hand, and that each and all hastened to provide their surprises and gifts for the evening.

In a neat little stone house situated at the north end, we will enter a suite consisting of two pretty rooms and a kitchen on the lower floor. It is three o'clock in the afternoon. At one of the windows sits a young girl about nineteen, working intently. She is simply dressed, but with a tasteful neatness which makes her pretty, though small figure, appear to advantage. Her complexion is dazzlingly white, and with such a delicate rose-tint that the bloom on her cheeks resembles the clear sky. The blonde hair is rich and abundant, the eyes large and of a clear blue. The whole indescribably winning. The small hands fly with incredible rapidity over the embroidery upon which she works.

The furniture of the room as well as the attire of the young girl, give evidence that the inmates of this abode belong to those, who through work and diligence gain their living, which, to be sure, keeps them above want, but yet binds the whole life to a continual labor unbroken by any recreation.

The young girl, who sews so industriously at the window, is none other than our old acquaintance, Anna, and the dwelling is that of Fru Tollin. In the five years that have passed since we last saw them,

there was considerably less of trouble to endure. The occurrence with the little bureau seemed to bring with it only blessings. The purchaser of the two cushions had come back on New Year's, and given quite a large order for some sewing, which had occupied Fru Tollin's and the girls' time as well as secured them a sustenance which freed the mother from her pressing care, and enabled the family to provide themselves with a better home. But this was not all; the stranger, Herr Elon Carling, came every evening to Fru Tollin's to instruct the girls in the living languages: something that he insisted upon doing merely for his own pleasure.

Through his acquaintance with the widow, he soon learned to know young André, who, under a hard and fierce struggle with the material necessities, continued to work and study his art, besides giving Marie lessons in drawing.

Carling was wealthy, and seemed also to have influence. He soon procured André a stipend, to which he, through his talent and his inspiration as a painter, was fully entitled. Carling, besides, bought several of the poor artist's pictures, and assisted him to dispose of many others.

In this way the years had passed.

Through Elon Carling's recommendations and acquaintances, Fru Tollin had steady work; and although their life passed in constant toil with the needle, they none of them found it irksome; for time flies fast when one is very busy. In the evening Carling came, to instruct and educate them like an elder brother. They soon regarded him as a relative or near friend, to whom they confided all their sorrows and communicated their joy.

From children the young girls grew into maidens, but this occasioned no change. Elon displayed the same brotherly friendship, and they were now so used to see in him only the friend, that it never entered their minds to analyze the kind of affection which they had for him. After this digression we return to Anna.

She was alone at home, and was in a great hurry with a collar which had to be ready by evening for the Baroness H——. Just as she had finished the last stitch, and was busy taking off the pattern, some one knocked at the door.

"Now the servant has come for the collar," thought Anna, and went to the door. When she opened it, there stood a servant to be sure, but it was not Baroness H——'s man, but Carling's, who left a box, and inquired from his master if he could come back

for an answer to the letter that was in it, after which he went away.

Anna regarded the box with some surprise, and opened it almost with hesitation, for it struck her as very strange that Carling should write, when it was arranged that they should spend the evening together. But before she had opened the letter, there was another knock at the door.

"Now it is surely from the baroness," thought Anna; but she was mistaken this time too; it was an old serving-woman who left her a letter from the artist, Felix André.

"Good gracious! I believe the people have got a writing mania on this Christmas eve. What can Felix have to write about? Just as if he could not come across the street and say in person what he has to communicate! Besides, are we not to meet in a couple of hours, when he comes here?" (André lived right opposite Fru Tollin.)

While Anna held the above little monologue in her thought, she laid André's letter to one side, and opened Carling's.

"Beloved Anna!" began the letter. With an almost frightened motion she put it down, but took it as quickly again and read the following:

"It is five years to-day since fate, or rather Provi

dence, brought you in my path and I learned to know you. Little did you then guess that the devoted self-sacrifice of the child had made such a deep impression upon the man, and that this impression would soon, through the daily intercourse and the knowledge of all the devotion and self-abnegation which dwell in your heart, change into a strong and fervent feeling. Ah! when I sat at your side, Anna, as your teacher, when you developed to me all the wealth of your soul and all the treasures your heart contained, then I felt that life without you would be a desert, and in my mind I constantly heard the echo of your low sobs when you stood in the gateway before your mother's home, with the intention of sacrificing for her the only object your childish soul held dear. Chance had brought me to that same spot, when the sound of your quiet weeping caused me to stop and listen, so that I caught your low prayer for forgiveness for the sacrifice you made. I could not distinguish your features; but when I entered your mother's room one hour later, a glance was sufficient to tell me which of the two was the self-renouncing.

"But before I say anything more, allow me, beloved Anna, to present to you a short account of my past life, and then, sweet, gentle girl, I shall place my destiny in your hands.

"Perhaps you have sometime heard Aunt Ankarkrona mention that she had a sister. Or, perhaps her fine feeling did not permit her to revive the memory of this sister, whose son had occasioned her so many and bitter sorrows. Be this as it may, I will now impart to you the whole of this sad history of everyday occurrence,—only a little supplement to the deplorable experience, through which a false and injudicious education brings one to the verge of the abyss which frivolity and lack of moral principles creates for the youth.

"Fru Ankarkrona had a sister, some years older than herself, who married a wholesale merchant, named Falk. I was their only child; my father and mother lived in luxurious and splendid style, and I was brought up amid vanity and folly. All my whims were gratified and my smallest wishes granted. That I should in this way, even as a child, acquire a fondness for pleasure, is a matter of course, and the word *denial* I had never heard. Thus I reached my sixteenth year without any definite idea of what I was to become, or that I should one day be obliged to take care of myself. Study had always been obnoxious to me, as well as all kinds of work and useful occupation; and as my tutor also found it very easy to escape sitting and forcing knowledge into such a changeling

as I, I learned almost nothing. So matters stood when I was confirmed. The next day my father was obliged to appeal to the bankrupt law. The following year he was dead, my mother plunged into the most extreme poverty, and I, at the age of sixteen, without any capacity to work for my existence. My aunt, Fru Ankarkrona, shared with my mother the little she possessed and paid for my course in a commercial institute, so that I could get a situation in some business-house. With my education and habits it was no easy thing to become an industrious and orderly youth, who ought to live a retired and economical life. No, I still had to retain my place among my old companions, cost what it might, and let them believe that my aunt was rich and that nothing was lacking me. The consequence was that I contracted debts, and when I became engaged in an office, I had already been obliged to appeal to my aunt's generosity to get them paid. The old lady took from her limited means and liquidated the expense of my pleasures and follies. She did it at an actual sacrifice, because, as I just said, she had already had to divide with my mother and me. I, who was not used to thinking where the money came from, heard her warnings without paying any attention to them, and never reflected upon what this sacrifice had cost her. I thought it

natural that the old people should furnish the means for the youth's amusements. Finally Aunt Ankarkrona said to me:

"'My boy, cease to make debts, for it is not possible for me to pay them again.'

"After that I was taken into the office of a wholesale merchant named D——. Two years passed in which I continued my vain and empty life; although, living at my aunt's house, I was able to see that my recklessness had compelled her to make great retrenchments. In short—one day, when my creditors pressed me hard, I took from my employer's safe the necessary sum. The theft was discovered. I was arrested.

"Ah! allow me to pass over my poor mother's grief, and the deep pain which filled the heart of my aunt at the intelligence of my crime. Through aunt Ankarkrona's tears, prayers, and obligation to pay back what I had stolen, I was released by my employer; but my name was branded, and, desperate over the shame and sorrow I had created, crushed under my disgrace, I went to sea under an assumed name. Two years afterwards I heard of the death of my mother. She had died from grief over her son, and this unfortunate and guilty son has never an-

shall never forgive himself the part he had in her death.

"Anna, I have tried through severity towards myself, through the most conscientious integrity, and the greatest forbearance with my fellows, to expiate my youthful errors. For what was done at nineteen, I have for seventeen years tried to atone. Have I succeeded?—This only the Supreme Being can determine.

"After having roamed around as a sailor for some years, I settled down in America, bought a little piece of land, and began to labor for my independence. I sent every year a little allowance to my aunt, who was always mild and kind, although she had been ruined through me, and did not possess more than a scanty pension to live upon. Through her letters and loving words, I received constant encouragement to work for the building-up of that prosperity which she had lost through me. So the time elapsed, when I one day received the news of her death through the newspapers. The old lady, who had never uttered any but mild and forgiving words to her recreant nephew, was now gone, and I could never more receive such words from her lips or through her letters. The object of my work, of my endeavor, was gone with her, and I felt so lonely and forsaken in the world. My mind became gloomy and morose.

"From this state of feeling I was roused one day by one of my countrymen, who lived in the neighborhood.

"As the result of a forty years' labor in America he had succeeded in amassing a very considerable fortune. He was a widower, and had but one child, a daughter, who was delicate and sickly, and consequently of a very sensitive disposition. One day he sent for me. He had long been sick, now I found him in his last extremity. He asked me, if I, who was all alone in the world and endowed with an upright character, would marry his daughter, who had taken a fancy to me, and thus assure him of her future, so that he could die calmly. My heart was attached to these good people, and I therefore found it no sacrifice to marry the frail and quiet Ida. Two years after my marriage my wife died, leaving behind her a little daughter, who followed her to the grave within two weeks.

'I was now again alone, but the possessor of a large fortune, and the longing seized upon me to see my native land. I disposed of a portion of my property, leaving the rest in the hands of a reliable administrator, in the event of my returning to America, and then departed for Sweden. I returned to my country a stranger to all who had known me, for

the American sun had burnt my complexion and given another cast to my appearance; even my name had undergone a change.

"Three months after my arrival, chance brought me to the street where you lived, and my attention was drawn by some sobs. I stopped and saw in the twilight a little girl standing outside a porch, crying bitterly, while she kissed some object and murmured a prayer. Then she went into a little insignificant store. I followed her, listened at the door and caught a word here and there of the conversation between her and the woman, so that I understood what it was about. I then promised myself to become the protector of the little girl and to promote her happiness, however life might shape itself for me. I called upon your mother; I saw your mild, earnest face, and guessed that you were the one whose happiness I had sworn to guard. You exercised, even as a child, such a great influence upon me, that I felt that you would one day become the object of my warmest love.

"That day, Anna, has now come; the day when my heart tells me that I cannot live without you; and now, my beloved, I ask of you, since you know my past life, can you love me? Will you share with me joy and sorrow? Whatever your answer may be,

sweet girl, my friendship will always remain the same. If you do not consider me worthy of being your mate, I shall nevertheless stand by your side, as a devoted friend.

"If it is so that your heart is attached to me,—then keep the enclosed treasure, which I have to thank for the glimpse I gained into your rich, generous and self-devoted heart; but should it be that gratitute only fills your soul, then return it to me, that I may keep it as a precious and holy remembrance of the moments in which, at your side, I have dreamed of a felicity of which the Almighty did not deem me worthy. Under all circumstances I shall still remain the most attached of Anna's friends.

ELON CARLING."

Anna had read the letter without daring to take breath; but when she finished, she clasped her hands and whispered, with her eyes turned to heaven,—a look in which supreme happiness was expressed:

"My God, I thank thee! . . . . I cannot feel myself worthy of being loved by *him*, who has been the object of all my thoughts during these years."

At that moment there was a quick knock at the door. Anna opened it, and Marie rushed in with an excited appearance and threw herself down on the

sofa, while she burst into violent sobs. Instinctively, Anna hid the letter and approached Marie, inquiring tenderly, as she put her arms around her sister's waist:

"What has happened?"

Marie lifted her face and looked at Anna with an expression of despair, saying:

"Anna, I have met *him*, and he told me that he had to-day asked for the hand of the girl whom he loved better than life. And I, I still live, although he has told me that. Oh! I felt as though my heart would burst. I could have screamed, so terribly did I feel;" and Marie hid her face in her sister's bosom and wept uncontrollably.

Anna had become unnaturally pale, and with a voice which she vainly endeavored to make calm, she asked:

"Of whom do you speak?"

"Of Elon, of course. Oh, Anna, Anna! When he marries—that day I shall die!"

"You love him, then?" faltered Anna.

"I do not know, but I feel that I shall die when he marries, that I would have liked all my life to sit at his feet and listen to his voice. Anna, Anna! how unhappy I am!"

Marie clasped her arms still more firmly around

Anna's neck, but at the same moment Carling's letter, which Anna had put in her bosom, dropped to the floor, and Marie's eyes fell unavoidably upon it.

"What is that?" exclaimed she, and stooped down quickly to pick it up.

"A letter to me," answered Anna, possessing herself of it.

"From *him!*"

The voice in which Marie uttered this was like a cry of pain.

Although Anna did not give vent to her feelings, it could be seen upon her colorless features that she suffered, and only through a strong effort succeeded in repressing her tears; but she hid the letter in her dress, and answered, as she passed her hand caressingly over her sister's burning brow:

"The letter is indeed from Elon, but treats only of a surprise which he intends for you."

"Let me read it!"

"No, then there would be an end to the surprise."

"Anna, it is to you that he has proposed!"

Marie pushed Anna quickly from her, and continued to weep convulsively. Anna was silent for some moments. She did not know how to answer Marie's question. She felt that this bliss, which she with so grateful a heart had seen smiling upon her, and which

she had considered so great that she did not deserve it, was now nearly slipping from her grasp. She looked at her sister's grief and despair with a gaze that expressed an equal degree of sorrow, although it was confined within her own breast. Then she embraced Marie, and whispered in a gentle loving voice:

"This evening you will see the wrong you do me. Remember my words. Carling will never become my mate."

We pass over what was further said between the sisters. Anna, with her sensitive and tender heart, succeeded in somewhat calming her sister, while she held up to her the possibility that all that Carling had said was a jest. Marie had shaken her head doubtfully, but her heavy sobs gradually subsided into a quiet weeping, which she was obliged to restrain, however, when their mother came home.

Anna took the box with the little bureau and the letter from André, and went into the other room, under the pretext that she had some little things to attend to for the evening.

"But what is the matter with you, Marie?" asked Fru Tollin, when she had taken off her cloak, and perceived Marie's tear-stained face.

"I have been crying," said Marie, with an ingenuous look into her mother's face.

"About what?"

"Oh! it was something between Anna and me," stammered Marie, who with difficulty swallowed her tears.

"Dear child, must you contend now, when you are full grown? You never did it when you were little. But this I will tell you, Marie, that in mildness and moderation you are far inferior to Anna, in consequence of your ungoverned temper and the difficulty you have to take upon yourself the smallest sacrifice. Everything that goes against you excites you, everything that differs from your wishes is a source of despair to you. My poor child, how shall you with such a disposition go through the world? Your whole life will in this way become a chain of troubles and sorrows, which you have created for yourself through your lack of submission and your incapability of making a sacrifice." The mother patted her daughter's cheek, which was wet with tears, and added: "Now let the sorrow go, and remember that it is Christmas eve." So saying, Fru Tollin went out in the kitchen.

"Your whole life will become an endless chain of troubles and sorrows," repeated Marie. "She is right. I am not submissive, not patient like Anna, have not the same power of self-sacrifice and renun-

ciation as she. Why, oh why am I not? Why do I not try to be like her?"

Marie sat down on the sofa and sank into thought. She remained so some time; at last she rose and went to Anna's door, which she softly opened.

Upon her knees before a chair was Anna with her face buried in her hands, weeping silently. On the table stood a box sealed and directed to Carling. Near it lay an open letter, signed *Felix*.

"Alas! it is I," thought Marie, "who have called forth all this suffering in Anna!" She approached her sister, but at that moment Anna sprang to her feet, for there was a knock at the door, and immediately a voice was heard asking for her.

As she rose, Anna perceived Marie.

"Are you here?" said she.

"Yes." Marie stretched out her hand with a beseeching gesture.

"Anna," cried Fru Tollin, "Baroness H—— desires to speak to you."

Anna went, and Marie was left alone in the room.

She stood looking a long time at the box that was to go to Carling. A conflict took place in the mind of the young girl, but finally she said to herself:

"I must have the assurance—yes, I must;" and she cut the cord which bound the box, and took off the

cover. She came near giving a cry of surprise when the little bureau, the dear souvenir of Aunt Ankarkrona, met her sight. But on the bureau lay a paper, and the desire to learn what it contained overruled all other feelings. Hastily Marie unfolded the paper and read the following, written by Anna:

"Never shall my heart be able to forget all that you have done for us, and until my death shall the remembrance remain in my soul. Would to God that it had been my lot to cheer your life with all the love you so richly deserve; but destiny has ordained otherwise, and our life careers may not run together. Therefore forget Anna, whom you now love, and know that it was not she that first struck you through her childish sacrifice, but the then twelve years old Marie, who appeared to you in such an attractive light. Indeed, the gift of the accompanying treasure ought thus to be bestowed upon my sister, who has shed so many tears of regret over its loss. How happy for her, if with it followed the offering of your heart, which I cannot accept! I have now, according to your request, with the return of the souvenir expressed my refusal. Ever your affectionate ANNA."

Marie stood completely stunned. The blow had that time struck deep. She did not burst out in any

wild and violent lament. No, she stood upright, and murmured almost mechanically:

"Lack of submission and inability to make a sacrifice, said mamma. And I, I should accept this offering, I should let Anna silently, without complaint, pine away and die, after having sacrificed her happiness for me. O God, sustain me!"

Marie put both hands to her brow, and remained silent a moment. Then she hastily raised her bowed head, went to the box, took from it the bureau as well as the paper, and hurried to tie the string around it again.

She had barely time to conceal the little bureau and the note, when Anna came in, saying:

'It is Carling's man;" she then hastened out with the empty box.

When Marie again found herself alone, she sank down on her knees and prayed. But no tear found its way down her pale cheek, no complaint passed her tightly closed lips. After a short but fervent prayer, and as she could now hear that Baroness H—— was about to leave and that Anna would soon be back, she went to the table, took up the letter which lay there, and read:

"Dear Anna! I turn to you as a friend, a sister, which you have always been to me, with a question,

which I pray that you may answer frankly. I do it to-day, because the answer is to me of so much importance that I cannot live through these holidays without possessing the assurance of what I may hope for the future. Tell me, what are the feelings that Marie has for me? Ah, you who are Marie's second self, the confidant of all her thoughts, you must know whether the affection she shows me is only friendly, or whether it springs from a warmer feeling. You know my love for Marie, you know that she from childhood has been an object upon which my heart has fastened all its hopes. Yet, to no one but you have I said how deeply I love her, and never shall a word about it pass my lips, if you believe that she does not reciprocate my feeling. If, again, you should feel that Marie's heart beats for me, then, Anna, I can say to her to-day, Be mine; for destiny has, through the little allowance I have received, made it possible for me. Send me some words in reply. I wait for them with burning intensity.

"I am invited to be with you to-night, you know that. Should love for me exist in Marie's heart, then you only need to write this word: *Come.* But if I have no hope, a *Do not come* will be all sufficient.

Your friend, FELIX."

Burning hot coursed Marie's blood, and a nervous tremor of pain shook her frame, but she dipped her pen, and when Anna opened the door, she had written this single word on a paper:

"*Come.*"

Anna had gone up to Marie and read over her shoulder the significant word.

"Marie, what does that mean?" exclaimed she.

"It means that I myself have answered Felix's question."

It seemed to Marie that it had cost her years of her life to pronounce these words.

"And your despair a while ago?" asked Anna, trembling.

"It is gone now, since I know that Felix loves me."

"And Carling?"

"He can marry, now that I am engaged to Felix."

Marie folded the letter and wrote with a trembling hand the address, as she said:

"You see, Anna dear, I thought it was hard that *he* should love any one more than us, because I think so . . . . so . . . . much of him; but Felix is dearer to me still."

Anna had sunk down on a chair, while she unconsciously moaned quite softly:

"Oh, Marie, Marie, what a cruel play with my

heart—which has induced me to . . . . to sacrifice . . . all that I could have conceived of happiness!"

Anna wept; Marie did not reply, or rather she was unable to speak. Besides Fru Tollin came in, saying:

"Dear girls, finish up your dispute and come. It is five o'clock, and Felix and Carling will soon be here. You must by all means fix up a little, and help me to light the candles."

"Directly, mamma," said Marie, and hastened out with the note, which she asked the maid to take over to Herr André.

Fru Tollin had but just time to light the candles and arrange the little tea-table before the sofa, when Elon Carling entered. His face was beaming with gladness. He went to Anna, who was alone in the room. Marie had upon his entrance hastened out to her mother in the kitchen.

Carling took Anna's hand, saying:

"Thanks, thanks, you beloved one, for the mute answer, which assured me of your heart and a future full of felicity!"

Anna fixed her large eyes upon him with a more than astonished expression, but she had not time to say a word, for through one door entered Felix, and through the other, Fru Tollin.

Marie had stayed in the kitchen. With a feeling of acute pain she clasped her hands together, whispering:

"Oh Thou above, give me courage and strength only a few hours longer, and then take my life!"

She lacked the power to go in, until her mother opened the door and called:

"Marie, we are waiting for you! You will take cold out there in the kitchen. Why do you not come in?"

Marie followed her mother. Felix came towards the young girl and with inexpressible joy seized her cold hand. Anna smiled and Elon looked happy.

"Alas!" thought poor Marie, "my course of action has made all happy, except myself."

They took tea. Anna looked constantly at Elon, as if to find the solution of the enigma. At last came a basket of packages. It contained Christmas gifts, which the little company intended for each other. The uppermost of these parcels was a little box, addressed to Anna; she opened it and saw Marie's bureau; but upon it lay a strip of paper with only these words: "*From Marie.*" Anna sprang up and threw her arms around her sister's neck, but Marie whispered:

"Hush, not a word, the lots are cast."

And when the family separated, Anna was engaged to Carling, and Fru Tolling had promised Felix that in two years he could call Marie his bride.

Thus ended the second Christmas eve.

Twenty-five years had passed, and it was now 1852.

Again it was Christmas eve, and we are going this time to introduce the reader into the two rooms, clean, but simply furnished even to poverty, where lived a widow with her son, twenty-one years of age.

The clock had just struck four. In one of the rooms sat the young man, bending over some papers, with his head resting on his hands. His whole countenance and attitude indicated deep dejection.

In the door between the two rooms stood a lady, tall and slight in form, of about forty. She regarded the young man's sorrowful aspect with an expression of deep commiseration and sympathy. A sigh, full of wretchedness, heaved his breast, and like an echo, the mother also sighed. He raised his head and turned round to her.

"Victor, my son," said the mother going to him. "How unhappy is not your mother, who must witness your trials and distress without being able to relieve them?" She had placed her hand on her son's shoul-

der and leaned her head against his. Some tears fell upon his brow, perhaps the most bitter an agonized heart can press forth, namely, a *mother's* over her child's suffering.

"Ah! my mother, forgive the pain I through my weakness give you. You who have already suffered so much, and might with reason have hoped that I would secure you an untroubled life;—but the blow came so unexpectedly, and tore down at once all the sweet and beautiful dreams I had nourished, that—"

"That you might not simulate a calm that was not in you, nor leave me in ignorance of the misfortune that has befallen us both. My beloved child, you are part of my heart; should I not then be your confidant? Come, my boy, and sit by me, and let us speak openly of the time which has passed under the burden of our sorrows and anxieties, leaving us no chance to talk together. Oh! if you knew how rich is this day in recollections, both painful and delightful! They extend back as far as my childhood."

She seated herself on a little sofa and drew her son down beside her, saying in a mild and sorrowful voice:

"Let us review this latter period and all the heart-troubles that have befallen us. You see, Victor, when your father died, it is now twelve years ago, he

left as an artist nothing behind him, with the exception of some valuable paintings. I had lived a happy life with him ;—if it was less brilliant in a pecuniary point of view, then it was all the more full of tenderness and peace. May God reward him for loving me so faithfully ! When he was gone, I found myself plunged into poverty. My strength would perhaps have failed me, had not Elon Carling, Anna's husband, through his noble liberality assigned to you such an ample allowance, that I could give you a good education and we both live free from care and anxiety. Oh ! my son, how happy have we not been through his kindness—until three years ago, when a relative of his first wife's began a suit about his inherited property, and during it chanced to discover that Carling did not bear his right name, as well as dragged up a youthful offence committed by Elon. To strengthen his claim, he alleged that Carling had never had a child by his first wife, but that he had come into possession of his wealth through fraud. The process became scandalous, and my poor brother-in-law, who wrote in vain to America for the testimony that he had actually had a little daughter, who died two weeks after her birth, left Sweden to go himself to America, intrusting a friend to take charge of the suit in his absence, as well as confiding his little daughter to his

care and installing you in his office. It was his and Anna's intention to unite you and Eva, but Providence had otherwise ordained. A year ago we were struck by that dreadful blow. My sister and her husband had started on their return voyage, on which they were wrecked, and I had lost my beloved Anna and Elon."

Marie (for the reader has probably guessed that the widow was none other than our old acquaintance, Marie Tollin) leaned her head upon her son's shoulder, and wept at the remembrance of the loss she had sustained.

"Yes," responded Victor in an agitated voice, "that was the first blow, which afterwards crushed all our hopes, and brought with it troubles, grief and despair."

"Not despair, child," replied the mother, looking upwards. "The Supreme Being does not impose any heavier burden than we can bear, remember that!"

"Ah, my mother! you are now as ever an angel of submission."

Marie smiled in a melancholy way, and in her mind resounded those words of her deceased mother, which had made such an indelible impression upon her: "*Your lack of submission.*"

But she resumed after a short pause: "Let us

continue our retrospect. With this news all suddenly changed. My brother-in-law had, it is true, before his departure from America, sent by mail all the proofs which confirmed that the property lawfully belonged to him; but as there was no will to be found after him, his first wife's relative, assessor G——, immediately took charge of his daughter and became your cousin's guardian. To consummate the misfortune, your employer and Carling's friend died. You were without a situation, I lost the support which my brother-in-law had so generously allowed me to enjoy. Some months later you were taken ill from grief over the loss of your cousin Eva, whom you had loved from childhood. Assessor G—— had in an insulting manner forbidden you his house, and . . . . Oh, my poor, poor Victor!—and given you to understand that even if he should have to confine his ward within four walls, she never should see you again or with his consent become the wife of such a beggar. All this, which your closed lips have kept from me, you uttered in the delirium of your fever. With your long and severe sickness, poverty entered again under our roof, and now we would surely be forced to dispose of the little we have left of our effects, had you not for these eight weeks with your copying, and I with some little work, been able to earn enough to live upon."

"Yes, for the time being; but even for this our work would have been insufficient, in consequence of my sickness, had not the son of my employer shared with me of the little inheritance his father left him. But the future, the future, my mother, how dark it is! I have no situation, and if I get one, my salary as a clerk is inadequate to afford you an easy life."

"Ah! Victor, for me you need not worry, my happiness lies in being allowed to live for you, and you know how economical your mother can be. Oh! all would be bright, if I knew that your heart did not bleed."

"If I alone suffered, I could battle as a man, but Eva . . . ."

A sigh of anguish escaped the youth.

At that moment some one knocked at the door. Fru André went to open it. It was an old woman with a hard and repulsive face.

"Good-day, dear madam, I am punctual, as you see, and come to hear what you have to say with regard to the settlement of our affairs," said the old woman, walking in.

Marie hastened to close the door between this and her son's room, and from the paleness which covered her cheeks, one could see that a painful memory was

awakened in the poor widow's breast. With a weary smile she said:

"Be so good as to be seated, Fru Jonas."

"You seem to have forgotten," said Fru Jonas in a loud voice, "that I have a levy upon your furniture, or perhaps you have asked me to come here to get back that debt of one hundred and fifty thalers, which you borrowed during your son's sickness?"

"My good Fru Jonas, I have requested you to call here in order to ask of you a postponement," answered Marie.

"Postponement! Do you really believe that I live on sunshine?—Do you think that I can advance money to all poor people? No, thank you prettily! I will tell you that if you do not immediately redeem the note, then I will seize the amount of what you owe me."

"Oh! you cannot be so cruel!" whispered Marie.

"Can I not? Yes, I can tell you, that it is my right; but I will not be cruel; I came to propose to you a way through which you can have time, for I have a kind heart, you must know."

"I will willingly meet your wishes, if I can."

Fru Jonas got up and went to a large oil painting which hung on the wall opposite the sofa, the only ornament the room contained, and said:

"You let me have that picture, and I will write upon the note seventy-five thalers and prolong it three months."

"Let you have that painting!" exclaimed Marie, frightened, springing towards it.

To understand the emotion which called forth this exclamation, we will mention in brief, that the painting represented an elderly lady sitting in a large easy-chair, blessing her two daughters who knelt before her; at a little distance from them stood two gentlemen, who looked upon the group with the deepest emotion. The painting was the work of her husband, the two gentlemen were the portraits of Carling and André, while the two daughters were herself and sister. The grouping was exceedingly fine, the likeness striking, and the whole a true master-piece. Marie's husband had presented the picture to her on the same day that her son was born, and then said:

"Marie, promise me, that whatever happens, you will never part with this work."

Marie had answered:

"This I promise you sacredly."

And now, now came this money-lender who held her things in pawn, and claimed her right of extortion. If Marie did not *give* her the painting, she had the power to *take* it.

Marie seized Fru Jonas's hand, and begged her so beseechingly; but in vain.

The old woman had long had her eyes on the painting, which she as a picture-dealer knew to be worth four times the sum Marie owed her. Her answer was, therefore:

"Well, as you do not want to have the affair settled in all kindness, then,"—she rose and went to the door, adding: "then I take it with the assistance of the law." At this moment two policemen came in from the entry, and Victor rushed into the room.

"What does this mean?" cried he, flushed with indignation.

"Why, my young sir, it means that I hold a note against your mother, and she has not redeemed it, so I intend to seize her goods; but perhaps you, sir, can discharge the obligation? You cannot, I see. Well, then, I take this picture to begin with, and the rest of the trash in this room."

"That picture you cannot take," retorted Victor, planting himself before it. "Pay yourself out of the furniture, for it will fully cover the amount of the note."

"And you believe that?" said the old woman; "what then becomes of the per cents and the expense

of the warrant?" Then she turned to one of the men, saying:

"Let us begin to value this here rubbish."

Marie had sunk down on a chair near her son. Victor stood erect, but a nervous trembling shook his frame.

"Madam," said he, firmly and earnestly, "that painting does not belong to my mother, but to me, and you have thus no right to take it; but that you may receive full compensation for the debt, take the furniture in my room also. I tell you beforehand that you never can take this painting, for before it shall fall into your hands, I will break the canvas."

"I am not so easily scared. I tell you that I *will* have the painting."

Marie gave a faint cry, and Victor raised his clenched fist to let it fall crashing upon the canvas; but a strong hand grasped his arm, and an earnest voice cried:

"Madman! what do you intend to do?"

With an angry gesture Victor turned round, and Marie raised her tearful eyes to see who the stranger was that mingled in this scene.

Before them stood an elderly man with an open benevolent countenance.

"Pardon me, madam," said he to Marie, "for

meddling in this annoying affair; but I consider myself partly entitled to do so, as I have joyful news to announce. I have a package to deliver to your son, but with the express order that he should not receive it until the very Christmas eve."

The stranger handed Victor a little box, upon which stood his name; then he turned to the woman, saying in a haughty and commanding voice:

"Be at my office after an hour, and I will defray Fru André's indebtedness. You know me, I am merchant S——; but now go instantly, or I might feel tempted to pitch you and your confederates down the stairs."

The money-lender and her assistants slunk away, and the gentleman closed the door after them.

In the meantime Victor had opened the little box, and gazed astonished upon its contents, as if he had fancied that some one was playing a hoax upon him; and it must be confessed that the object was calculated to awaken these feelings, for the box held a little extremely old-fashioned doll-bureau.

Marie, who saw her son's mute surprise, went towards him, and when her eyes fell upon the object of his disappointed expectations, she gave a cry of both joy and pain; a cry which bore in it all the memories full of sorrow and happiness which the sight of this

object called forth. With all the vivacity of her youth she took the little bureau, pressed it reverently to her lips, while the tears streamed down her pale cheeks, and she murmured:

"Oh! my mother, my sister! You are both gone." And at the recollection that with the money she had once obtained for the little treasure, she had had the joy of mitigating young André's want; he who afterwards became to her such a tender and good husband,—she added, "and you also, my Felix!"

The merchant and Victor had been dumb witnesses of this emotion, which the sight of the little insignificant object had awakened in her. At length the former suggested:

"Be so kind, madam, as to see if there are not some papers in one of the drawers; for in the letter which I received fourteen days ago from the Swedish consul in America, it was said, that in the box which had already in the fall been sent from New York, and with which were several documents which deposited with me a very considerable sum for the benefit of the widow André and her son Victor André, was a letter, which would enlighten you from whence the donations came."

Marie drew out one of the small drawers, and there

lay actually two letters, one written by Carling, and containing these words:

"This little bureau have I to thank for the happiness of my life; for through it I learned to know my wife, who has created my felicity, and your mother, Victor, who has always appeared to me as an angel of mildness, submission and love. Be at the office of the wholesale merchant S——, and you shall there find that I have never ceased to think of the little Marie, who to relieve the need of her loved ones, sacrificed this little keepsake the most precious she possessed.

"I may perhaps be dead when you receive this; but my express wish is, that if you and Eva still love each other, she may become the wife of Marie's son.

"All this you will find expressed in my will, which the Swedish consul will forward to Herr S—— as soon as he receives the intelligence of my death.

Your fatherly friend,

ELON CARLING."

The other letter was from Anna, and contained these lines:

"Thanks, dear, beloved sister, for the happiness I through your sacrifice have enjoyed. This little treasure, a dear memento of your self-sacrificing

heart, has followed me like a talisman, bringing with it blessing. May it now, when it returns to your hands, carry with it as much happiness as it has given me. Thanks, you good, you loving heart, and may the Almighty repay you for all that I have to thank you for, in case destiny decrees that we shall not see each other again. Eva and Victor should then with redoubled love enfold you; you have only lived for the happiness of others, ever forgetting your own. They will return you a slight recompense for all your sacrifices; for Eva would not be my child if she did not love you as her own mother.

In death, your

ANNA."

Ah! the tears which bathed Marie's cheeks, they were both bitter and sweet; bitter at the remembrance that they were dead, those beloved ones; sweet at the thought that she had created her sister's happiness, and that the latter now, as a recompense, bestowed felicity upon her son. A mute, but speaking embrace, interpreted the feelings of the mother and son. When the first emotions had subsided, Herr S—— told them that he had received in the fall the will and the other papers from America, as it was now, after a year's interval, considered certain that Herr

Carling and his wife had been wrecked in the vessel with which they departed from America, and which had been lost during the passage to England. But together with the will and the bequests followed the instruction, that nothing should be done in the matter, until the consul had had time to sell the estates which Carling had left in America, and that Herr S—— should not impart anything to the persons interested before Christmas eve, when he was to deliver the box to Fru André's son and bring Carling's daughter to her. Herr S—— was besides directed to be the administrator of the daughter's property until she and Victor joined their destinies.

Scarcely had Herr S—— finished his report, before the door opened and his wife entered with Eva, who threw herself with tears of joy into Marie's arms, and with a loving smile extended her hand to Victor.

A couple of hours later the three sat on the sofa before a tea-table, and Marie related to her children the history of the little bureau, and concluded it in these words, which she uttered with deep emotion:

"Ah! if Anna and Elon could share our happiness, then I would have had nothing more to desire here on earth."

"Then you now have your only desire granted!"

exclaimed two voices from Victor's room, and on the threshold stood Elon and Anna.

Life does not have many such moments to offer us as that in which Marie pressed her loved ones to her heart. God had now richly rewarded her.

The fact was simply this, that Carling and his wife had been rescued from the shipwreck by a privateer; but, after a year's captivity with the latter, had been delivered from them by the crew of an English man-of-war.

Thus ended the third Christmas eve.

Victor and Eva were married, and Marie found in their happiness and in the affection of her sister and brother-in-law a rich recompense for the trials she had endured.

The little bureau still constitutes a precious treasure in the family, who keep it as a talisman of good luck.

That every good and self-sacrificing act sooner or later brings with it reward, this little story is a new proof.

A CARAMEL.

SCENIC CHRISTMAS PLAY FOR SMALL ARTISTS AND THE HOME AUDIENCE.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

The BARON.
GUNNAR, twelve years old.
GEORGE, eleven years old.
JOHN, eight years old.
LEJLA, seven years old.
} His children.
CALLE, thirteen years old, the pastor's son.

(*A comfortable room in the country. Playthings of every description scattered around the floor. On the sofa lie* GUNNAR *and* GEORGE, *stretched out at their ease.* JOHN *and* LEJLA *likewise, each in an easy chair.*)

FIRST SCENE.

Gunnar. Usch! How tedious these long Christmas holidays in the country are! All my Christmas presents are broken to pieces, and I am tired of them besides.

John. And then they have let our splendid coasting-hill thaw away.

George. Yes, now ride down in the sand, he who can!

Gunnar. The ice on the mill-dam is covered with water. When I seated myself on my sled yesterday, I got completely wet through, so that our parents have now forbidden us that pleasure. Why then did we receive our new skates?

John. I wish I knew why they should let it thaw just during our vacation!

George. Little simpleton! It is the mild weather's fault, and not any person's. Don't you remember your natural history?

John. Oh, if it would only freeze several degrees to-night! That would be something like!

George. Then the whole region would suffer for lack of water, both men and beasts, says uncle Pehr.

Lejla. 'One must not for his own pleasure forget his neighbor's need,' says papa.

John. Oh, little Lejla is always so book-learned and wise! (*Looks out of the window.*) Hurrah! There comes Calle Winterblad trudging along from the parsonage. Hurrah!

Gunnar and *George.* (*Rushing to the window.*)

Calle is coming! Calle is coming! Hurrah for Calle! (*All hasten to the door to welcome the visitor.*)

John. Now it will be jolly.

Second Scene.

(*The former.* Calle, *a bright boy, rosy-cheeked and full of life.*)

Gunnar, George and John. (*In chorus.*) Why didn't you come this morning, as you promised? Yes, as you promised so surely?

Gunnar. Have you my jack-knife with you which you promised to sharpen?

Calle. Take care! take care! We are trampling the tin soldiers to pieces on the floor, and the house, and the castle, and the trees and animals! Oh, oh, oh! The beautiful playthings!

Gunnar. (*Shoves them all away with his foot.*) Away with the rubbish! You can make much better playthings yourself, Calle. Do you know what has become of your little locomotive and your steamboat?

Calle. I suppose you have thrown them away.

George. No indeed, papa has had the blacksmith solder each of them fast to a block of marble, and uses them for paper-weights. What do you think of that, sir?

John. Papa says they are a pair of *master-pieces.*

Gunnar. Where did you put my knife?

Calle. Here is the knife, but the large blade is broken.

Gunnar. (*Half crying.*) Fie, Calle! How could you be so mean?

Calle. But do you know how it happened, and why I did not come this morning as I promised?

All. No, why didn't you come?

Calle. I was just on my way here, when I, from the bridge, saw the forester's little Petter sliding on the ice above the mill. The stream is frozen, as you know, and the ice is strong at the sides, but in the middle it is very thin. Crash! Petter tumbled in! I screamed and he screamed, but no one heard us. I jumped down from the bridge, flew to the spot, threw myself on my stomach and got him by the hair. But just as I pulled the little fellow up, the whole sheet of ice which held us loosened from the thick mass, and we began to drift down the stream.

George. That was fun!

Calle. We squealed like a pair of pigs, but everybody was deaf. I had taken a pole with me from the bridge, and I could reach the hard ice with it, but what good did it do, when there was no hook on the end? Then I took Gunnar's jack-knife, and tied it fast to the pole with my narrow neck-scarf. I had to hurry, but I made the knife as firm as a rock with

two double knots. A little above the dam I planted it solidly in the land-ice, but then it was mighty ticklish to get across, for the floating-ice began to break when we went to the edge. Petter fell down, but I helped him up and over. Then I was to take a good leap myself, but—crack went the knife, and I found myself in the water.

John. That was a great go!

George. Well, what did you do?

Gunnar. (*Eagerly.*) Did you come up again?

Lejla. (*Anxiously.*) I hope you didn't drown!

Calle. (*With comical solemnity.*) Yes, I went to the bottom, and there I lie still as food for fishes.

Lejla. (*Who in her excitement does not see the joke, half crying.*) Poor Calle!

The boys. (*Laughing.*) Now little Lejla is stupid!

Lejla. (*Recovers herself and smiles.*) Yes, that I am, but only for the moment.

Calle. I climbed up again at last with nails and claws, and then Petter and I went home to papa at flying speed. I got scolded a little first, on account of the wet clothes of course, and then praised a little of course, and then had a little warm coffee of course, and then leave of absence of course. I was let off from being teacher to my little brothers and sisters. Papa was in such a hurry with his book of sermons.

which is going to be printed, and which is to provide food and clothing for his five little motherless young ones.

Lejla. Why should your mother die and leave you last year?

Calle. Ask God the Father why the hawk takes the sparrows' mother. (*Wipes his eyes.*) But now we must have some fun! (*Looks at the playthings.*) Ah! how many fine playthings you turn up your noses at, spoiled rich man's children! If I owned them, I would sell them and with the money pay my schooling for two years. Oh! how I envy one who can go to the Polytechnic School!

George. Have you your humming-top with you?

Calle. (*Takes out a humming-top.*) I always carry my Christmas present in my pocket. I have received a humming-top as a Christmas present for four years, and never get any other plaything, for papa is so poor. Papa got one, when he was little, from his father, who was also poor, and he has had more enjoyment from it than many others have from the finest things, papa says. And so have I. My humming-top can become whatever I choose to make it. (*Pats his plaything.*) I can make it a king, for I have a paper crown and a mantle in my pocket, an

archbishop, a cannon, a locomotive, a steamboat, a pear, yes, anything!

Lejla. Dear Calle, then make it something.

John. Make it a pear and let us taste it.

Calle. No, to-day we will have another game, we will be playthings *ourselves.* We will play theatre, as I saw in the city, when I was invited by the Baron to go with Gunnar and George. One of us shall be king, another queen, another a general, a corporal and a soldier with a banner.

Gunnar, George and *John.* (*In chorus.*) I will be king!

Lejla. And I will be queen.

Calle. That is settled. But the one who is the smartest shall be king.

George. Then you ought to be king yourself.

Calle. No, the one who can solve this enigma first: Two persons met each other on a road. 'Good-day, my son!' said the elder to the younger. 'Yes, certainly I am your *son*,' answered the younger, 'but you are not my *father!*'—How were they related?

Gunnar. Oh! that is easy enough, it was his *step-father!*

Calle. No, it was an *own* son to the elder.

George. Dear me, shall one be king in that way?

Calle. Yes, a king must settle all disputed points.

Gunnar. Well, it was his *godfather.*

John. *Grandfather!*

Lejla. I will not trouble myself to guess, for I am the *queen.* (*Turns away with disdain.*)

Gunnar. (*Racking his brains and walking to and fro.*) '*Own* son to the elder.' 'Certainly I am your *son*, but you are not my *father*,' said he. The elder person was perhaps his *mother?*

Calle. Hurrah! Rightly guessed! Gunnar is king!

George. Then I am general!

John. And I am corporal. (*The children's father, the Baron, is seen, unperceived by them, peeping in the door.*)

Calle. (*Who has made a paper crown.*) And I a soldier with a banner. (*Places the crown on Gunnar's head.*) Here, oh king, is your crown! (*Takes the poker.*) Here your sceptre! (*Hangs a many-colored table-cover over Gunnar's shoulders.*) And here your royal mantle. This easy-chair is your throne! (*Takes out his handkerchief and ties it on his cane.*) We swear you fidelity and allegiance. Reign over us, I am your soldier, your army, I will guard your country and defend your flag. Long live the king! Hurrah, hurrah, hurrah!

Gunnar. (*Who has seated himself on his throne*

with the queen Lejla on his right hand. He looks mighti ly embarrassed.) But, Calle, what shall I say?

Calle. (*Walking to and fro on his post at the door.*) A king must say nothing, only command and rule, but rule mildly, encourage industry and virtue, heroism, art and knowledge; that is what it says in a book which I have read.

George. What shall the general do?

John. And the corporal?

Calle. Obey! Only obey! The one who forgets his part will be thrown into a well, the one who plays best, shall have my new reed-flute with the stops.

Lejla. (*Quite anxiously.*) Is the well very deep?

Calle. Gracious queen, (*making a salute,*) forty queens on top of each other would scarcely fill the bottom. (*Walks to and fro.*)

Lejla. Oh dear! I think I will call papa.

Gunnar. My general, command my army to conquer the neighboring kingdom before night. (*Points with his sceptre.*)

George. Who will then guard your country, your majesty?

Gunnar. My corporal.

John. I have no uniform and no sword.

Gunnar. He grumbles. General, have his head cut off!

Lejla. Mercy on me!

George. Your majesty! We have no executioner.

Gunnar. He grumbles. My army, shoot him to death!

Calle. Cruel king! Reign like a humane person.

Gunnar. Rebellion and treason! I will kill all my people and get new subjects.

George. We have got another tyrant! Come, corporal, and all my army, and we will hurl the king from his throne.

Calle. Wisely said. Terrible deeds will be done. None of you have yet forgotten your parts, all have deserved my reed-flute.

Gunnar. The flute must be mine, my dear Calle, my dear army I mean. My queen, shall we not have a court ball?

Lejla. Yes, with confectionery and preserves, and apple-dumplings, and raisins and almonds.

Gunnar. General! Summon my whole court and all my musicians!

George. (*Bowing.*) The court is away at a tea-party, and the musicians are tooting with all their might at a concert down by the palace gates.

Gunnar. The general is disrespectful! He is degraded to corporal, and you, corporal, shall be my

field-marshal and chamberlain. No one shall make me forget my part.

Lejla. Nor me!

George. Nor me!

John. Nor me either! (*A large bag of confectionery is thrown in through the door, which is quickly closed again.*)

All. (*Except Calle, as they rush forward to snatch the bag.*) Hurry! A bag of candy!

George. We will share! We will share! Don't break the bag open!

Lejla. Don't tear my dress!

Gunnar. The bag is sealed! (*Examines it closely.*)

John. Here is something written.

Gunnar. (*Reads.*)

"Ah, if life's blessings have been yours,
Then to others good impart,
Yes, share your joy, for this secures
A happy and contented heart."

George. Papa's handwriting! We must *share*, that's what it means! Hurrah! Let me open it!

Gunnar No, let me open it! I, who am *the greatest.*

John. I, who am *the least*, must open it.

Lejla. I, who am *a girl*, must open it.

Calle. (*Roaring.*) In the well with you all! You have all forgotten your parts!

Gunnar. (*Throws away his crown and his mantle.*) Ah! who wouldn't exchange a king's crown for a bag of candy! (*Opens the bag carefully.*)

Calle. Yes, the king throws away his crown, then I will also abandon his flag! (*Throws away the flag, and joins the others, curious as they.*) Just see there, what a large caramel lies on top!

Gunnar. (*Reads on it while the Baron, his father, enters softly and unobserved.*)

> "For the one who this day on the river of life
> Has thought of his *neighbor*, not of *himself*."

Calle. What does that mean?

Gunnar. (*Jubilantly.*) Hurrah! That's a poser. But I understand. It is something for Calle Winterblad from papa. A caramel because he has saved little Petter on *the river of life*, and come near drowning *himself*.

Calle. (*Confused.*) But the Baron does not know of that. None but papa and you know it.

Lejla. Let us taste the caramel now, dear Calle.

Calle. (*Breaks open the cover, and takes out a folded paper.*)

John. Ah! what sort of a caramel is that?

Calle. (*Reads.*) "To Carl Anton Winterblad,—who to-day with self-sacrificing courage and resolution saved a drowning child, and whose highest desire is to cultivate his fine mechanical talents in a suitable school,—I pledge myself to pay for all his studies and defray his necessary expenses *from this day* to his twenty-first year, wishing happiness and success to the good, skilful, studious and brave boy.

Jan. 5th 1870.

RUTGER RONNERHJELM."

Gunnar. Dear, good papa!

George. He is just splendid!

John. But Calle didn't get any caramel?

Lejla. He shall have all mine.

Calle. (*Beside himself with joy.*) Ah! I have got a caramel which I shall suck on as long as I live! (*Kisses the paper, transported.*)

The Baron. (*Who has approached unseen, laying his hand caressingly on Calle's head.*) No, not longer than to your twenty-first year. Then you must try to get yourself another caramel, my brave Calle: (*The Baron's children cluster around their father petting and fondling him.*)

Calle. (*Embarrassed.*) Ah! how shall I thank you,

when I am ashamed to *cry?* (*Seizes the Baron's hand hastily and kisses it.*)

The Baron. (*Who tries to draw away his hand.*) An able little *man*, like you, never ought to kiss *men's hands.*

Calle. But how did you know about it, Herr Baron?

The Baron. I have been out riding and happened to stop in at your father's, and then I learned all. But even before your watery exploit to-day, I was thinking of preparing that caramel.

Gunnar. That is glorious! Hurrah for Calle, who is to be a mechanic! You must build me a steamboat.

George. And me a locomotive, so that I can travel to see you.

John. And me you must make a cock, that can crow.

Lejla And me a doll, that can talk.

The Baron. And me you must through your example procure good children, who always make themselves deserving of my *love.* That is also a caramel, but one which bears sucking on, for it never melts, like all your other caramels. (*Stands fondly in the midst of his children.*)

CURTAIN FALLS.

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